
McNeese State University Graduate Student Orientation Guide 2006-2007

100. PURPOSE

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/catalog/2006/2006-2007%20Catalog.pdf>

McNeese State University was established to bring to Southwest Louisiana an institution of higher learning which would provide students with equal opportunities to receive the education and training needed to participate fully and wisely in the intellectual, economic, and social life of our democratic society. The purpose of the Doré School of Graduate Studies (DSGS) is fourfold: professional training, to contribute to increased competency in specialized fields; research, to further the development of students in techniques and methods of scholarly research; knowledge, to develop broader and deeper understanding of human knowledge; and preparation, to stimulate and encourage students for preparation in further graduate study.

Questions about graduate student issues should be directed to the Dean of GSGS at (337) 475-5394 or to the Registrar's Office at (337) 475-5356. Comments about this document should be sent to the Doré School of Graduate Studies, McNeese State University, Lake Charles, LA 70609-2180 or emailed to mead@mcneese.edu.

101. MCNEESE STATE UNIVERSITY HISTORY

In 1938, Louisiana founded McNeese State University, then known as the Lake Charles Junior College, as a division of Louisiana State University. The opening session of the college began on September 11, 1939. The following fall, the school changed its name to John McNeese Junior College to honor John McNeese, a renowned Southwest Louisiana educator and the first superintendent of schools in Imperial Calcasieu Parish. In 1950 McNeese became a four-year college in its own right and came under the authority of the Louisiana Board of Education. Finally, in 1970, McNeese State University became the official name of the school.

McNeese achieved Commission on Colleges/Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accreditation in 1954 and maintains its regional accreditation status as a Level IV institution authorized to award associate, bachelor, master, and specialist degrees. The University also provides opportunities for continuing education in support of its mission to value lifelong learning. As a member of the University of Louisiana System and a selective admissions institution, McNeese offers degrees through six academic colleges: Business, Education, Engineering and Technology, Liberal Arts, Nursing, and Science. McNeese's student body comprises over 8,500 students from throughout Louisiana, the United States, and approximately 50 countries. McNeese's athletic programs are NCAA-certified for competition at I-AA and I-A levels. The football team achieved national prominence when it advanced to the national playoffs in 1997 and 2002.

The McNeese State University campus in Lake Charles, Louisiana features 68 buildings on 500 acres dotted with live oak trees and azalea bushes. The McNeese community continues to use the three original structures - Kaufman Hall, Ralph O. Ward Memorial Gym (the Arena), and Francis G. Bulber Auditorium. Bulber Auditorium, a striking example of Art Deco architecture, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

McNeese State University upholds a long tradition of service to the Southwest Louisiana community and the nation. The University's motto of "Excellence with a Personal Touch" extends beyond the classroom to offering help to others in times of need. During World War II, the campus was the headquarters of the Louisiana Maneuvers, an extensive military exercise to prepare American soldiers for battle. In 1957, the McNeese community gave aid and comfort to the victims of Hurricane Audrey and served as the National Guard's base of rescue operations. Recently, McNeese provided shelter for New Orleans residents and university students fleeing Hurricane Katrina. McNeese faced one of its greatest challenges when Hurricane Rita struck in the fall of 2005. The storm caused devastating damage to campus facilities and infrastructure. The recovery effort after Hurricane Rita showed the community of Southwest Louisiana the high caliber of McNeese faculty, staff, and students in their commitment to complete the semester and move forward in support of the core values of academic excellence, student success, fiscal responsibility, and university/community alliances.

102. UNIVERSITY MISSION

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/ie/institutionalinformation/mission.pdf>

McNeese State University, a selective admissions institution, provides education, research, and service that support our core values of academic excellence, student success, fiscal responsibility, and university-community alliances.

The University's fundamental educational mission is to offer associate, baccalaureate, and specific graduate curricula distinguished by academic excellence. The University engages in collaborative ventures to benefit industry and to enhance economic development and cultural growth in this region and beyond.

The foundation for student success begins with faculty commitment to excellence in teaching, research, and creative and scholarly activity. At McNeese State University, a member of the University of Louisiana System, students cultivate skills for critical thinking and effective expression and gain an understanding of the global community. The learning and social environment integrates discipline-specific knowledge with the values of lifelong learning, ethical responsibility, and civic engagement.

103. INSTITUTIONAL GOALS

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/ie/institutionalinformation/Institutional%20Goals-8.11.05.pdf>

CORE VALUE – ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

1. Emphasize excellence in instruction.
2. Develop programs that are viable, innovative, and relevant to market needs.
3. Infuse a global outlook and ethical standards in course content and curriculum development.
4. Uphold the commitment to regional and national program accreditation.
5. Encourage undergraduate and graduate research in appropriate disciplines.

CORE VALUE – STUDENT SUCCESS

1. Foster a climate that enhances student learning, focuses on retention, values advising, and enriches the quality of campus-life.
2. Nurture an environment to support cultural diversity.
3. Present students opportunities for leadership.
4. Provide venues for learning to attract non-traditional students.
5. Provide an aesthetically-pleasing campus, functional facilities, and state-of-the-art equipment.

CORE VALUE – FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

1. Engage in continuous assessment, evaluation, and improvement.
2. Utilize the role of technology to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of campus operations.
3. Garner outside funding sources to support the University mission.
4. Capitalize on efficient use of resources.
5. Support efforts to obtain federal funding.

CORE VALUE – UNIVERSITY-COMMUNITY ALLIANCES

1. Support mutually beneficial university/community collaborations.
2. Strengthen economic development through partnerships that provide technical assistance and information transfer to business and industry.
3. Enhance artistic, humanistic, and cultural opportunities in the area.
4. Retain certification and maintain competition in NCAA athletic programs.
5. Partner with educational agencies to improve the quality of life in our region.

104. DIVERSITY AWARENESS

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/policy/diversity.php>

The faculty, staff, and students at McNeese State University reflect the diversity of our nation and the world. The University welcomes the rich environment that such diversity provides. Members of the University community have an obligation to support the community by showing respect to all who are a part of it.

Members of the University community also have an obligation to comply with all federal and state laws relating to diversity matters. Neither the laws nor the University intend to dictate the thoughts or feelings of individuals. The University does require that actions and behaviors comply appropriately and respectfully with both the law and University policy. Employees are expected to maintain a collegial relationship with all members of the University community.

This "Diversity Awareness Policy" is incorporated into the Faculty/Staff Handbook, the Code of Student Conduct, Classified Civil Service Handbook, the Affirmative Action Plan, and any other appropriate policy manuals that govern behavior or grievance procedures relating to University employees and/or students. This is also a part of every organization chartered by McNeese State University. Any group or individual wishing to operate under the aegis of the University or to use the University's facilities must abide by this policy. All course syllabi must include the statement "Students should visit the MSU web page at <http://www.mcneese.edu/administration/vpsse> for information about diversity awareness and sexual harassment policies and procedures."

McNeese State University does not discriminate with regard to race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, disability, veteran status, age, or sex in admission to or employment in its education programs or activities. Inquiries concerning the application of Title IX and its implementing regulations or equal opportunity may be referred to the Title IX Coordinator and Equal Opportunity Officer: Vice President of Special Services and Equity, Box 93248, McNeese State University, Lake Charles, Louisiana 70609. Telephone: voice (337) 475-5428; hearing impaired TDD (337) 475-5722.

105. GRADUATE SCHOOL

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/colleges/grad/default.htm>

The categories of admission to the Graduate School are Degree Status and Non-Degree Status.

105.1 Degree Status

Degree Status includes all graduate students intending to pursue a graduate degree. There are three categories of Degree Status: Regular Admission, Conditional Admission, and Temporary Admission.

105.1.a. Regular Admission

Applicants for Regular Admission into degree programs must meet general admission requirements, in addition to those of the individual departments. To be eligible for regular admission, applicants must meet the following criteria:

1. Satisfy general admission requirements for entry into Graduate School.
2. Hold a baccalaureate degree from a regionally-accredited U.S. institution or its foreign equivalent.
 - a. Students seeking admission to the specialist degree program must hold a master's degree from a regionally-accredited U.S. institution.
3. Have earned a minimum grade point average of 2.5 on a 4.0 scale on all undergraduate work attempted or a minimum grade point average of 2.75 on all upper division course work attempted.
4. Have earned satisfactory scores on the standardized tests required by the individual degree programs.
5. Have met all other requirements for admission into individual degree programs.
6. Have satisfactory academic standing at the last institution attended.
7. Be recommended in writing by the department head or graduate faculty advisor for acceptance into the individual degree programs.
8. Be approved for Regular Admission status by the Graduate Dean.

**QUICK REFERENCE
STEPS IN COMPLETING DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

	WHAT	WHEN	PROCEDURES
1.	Admission to Graduate School	At least 30 days prior to registration	Submit application for admission to the Office of the Registrar
2.	All Official Transcripts	Prior to start of semester/term for which application is made.	Have transcripts sent directly from institutions attended to the Office of the Registrar.
3.	GRE Scores	Prior to or within first semester/term of enrollment.	Have scores sent directly from testing agency to McNeese.
4.	GMAT Scores (For MBA program applicants only)	Prior to start of semester/term for which application is made.	Have scores sent directly from testing agency to McNeese.
5.	Application for admission to Graduate Degree Program.	Within first semester/term of enrolment.	Consult with faculty advisor; submit appropriate forms.
6.	Thesis Instructions	Prior to typing thesis.	Obtain booklet form Graduate School.
7.	Application for Degree	During registration of semester/term in which degree requirements will be completed.	Complete form in departmental office.
8.	Comprehensive Exam	Must be taken no later than two weeks before conferring of degree.	Consult with advisor to set up exam date.
9.	Submit Thesis	No later than two weeks before conferring of degree.	Submit to Graduate School.
10.	Thesis Binding Fee	At time original and copies are submitted.	Obtain form from Graduate School and pay Cashier.
11.	Commencement	At end of Spring and Fall semesters.	

105.1.b. Conditional Admission

Applicants who meet all Regular Admission status requirements except for the grade point average requirements may be admitted on a conditional basis.

1. To qualify for Conditional Admission, an applicant must have earned a minimum grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale on all undergraduate work attempted or a minimum grade point average of 2.5 on all upper division course work attempted. Additionally, the applicant must meet the departmental grade point average requirement specified for Conditional Admission.
 - a. International applicants seeking conditional admission must have earned a minimum overall undergraduate grade point average of 2.0 and a minimum upper division grade point average of 2.5.
2. To remain in Conditional Admission status, a student must: (1) maintain a minimum graduate cumulative grade point average of 3.0; (2) earn no more than one grade of "C"; and (3) earn no grade lower than "C". If a student fails to meet the requirements for conditional status, the student's status will be changed to non-degree.
3. Conditional Admission status will be changed to Regular Admission status when a student earns 12 semester hours of graduate credit with at least a 3.0 cumulative grade point average, no more than one grade of "C", and no grade lower than "C". At the time a student completes 12 semester hours of graduate credit, if he/she is not eligible for Regular Admission status, the student's status will be changed to non-degree.
4. No more than 12 graduate hours earned by a student in Conditional Admission status may be used toward a graduate degree, provided the credit is recommended or approval to the Graduate Dean by the appropriate department head.

105.1.c. Temporary Admission

Students intending to pursue a graduate degree, but who do not qualify for either Regular or Conditional Admission status, will be placed in Temporary Admission status for one term of enrollment.

1. After one term of enrollment, if the student does not qualify for either Regular or Conditional Admission status, the student's status will be changed to non-degree.
2. No more than 12 graduate hours earned by a student in Temporary Admission status or in Regular Non-Degree status may be used toward a graduate degree, provided the credit is recommended for approval to the Graduate Dean by the appropriate department head.

105.2. Non-degree Status

Non-Degree Status includes graduate students not intending to pursue a graduate degree. There are two categories of Non-Degree Status: Regular Non-Degree and Special Non-Degree.

105.2.a. Regular Non-Degree

Regular Non-Degree status includes graduate students seeking to enroll exclusively in graduate courses or in a combination of graduate and undergraduate courses.

1. Regular Non-Degree categories include:
 - a. Extended Studies. For students seeking graduate or a combination of graduate and undergraduate credit, but who do not intend to pursue a degree.
 - b. Visiting or Transient. For students admitted to a graduate program at another institution who wish to take courses at McNeese for transfer credit.
 - c. Master's Plus 30. For students who already have a master's degree. These students are not admitted into any particular degree program.
 - d. Teacher Certification. For students seeking initial or add-on certification and intending to enroll in graduate courses only or a combination of undergraduate and graduate courses.
 - e. Dietetic Certification. For students accepted into the Dietetic Certification Program.
2. Applicants for Regular Non-Degree status must meet the following requirements:
 - a. Satisfy general admission requirements.
 - b. Hold a baccalaureate degree from a regionally-accredited U.S. institution or its foreign equivalent.
 - c. Have a minimum grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale on all undergraduate work attempted or a minimum grade point average of 2.5 on all upper division course work attempted.
 - d. Have GRE scores sent directly to the University from the testing agency.
 - e. Have satisfactory academic standing at the last institution attended.
3. Students in Regular Non-Degree status may enroll in graduate or undergraduate courses for which they have the appropriate prerequisites.
4. Admission as a Regular Non-Degree student does not imply that the student meets requirements for any graduate degree program.
5. No more than 12 graduate hours earned by a student in Temporary Admission status or in Regular Non-Degree status may be used toward a graduate degree, provided the credit is recommended for approval to the Graduate Dean by the appropriate department head.
6. Students in Regular Non-Degree status wishing to change to Degree status must re-apply for admission.
7. Students in Regular Non-Degree status are not eligible for Special Non-Degree status.

105.2.b. Special Non-Degree

Special Non-Degree status includes graduate students seeking to enroll in undergraduate courses only.

1. Special Non-Degree categories include:

- a. *Extended Studies*. For students seeking undergraduate credit only who do not intend to enroll in graduate courses or pursue a graduate degree.
 - b. *Teacher Certification*. For students seeking initial or add-on certification and intending to enroll in undergraduate courses only.
 - c. *Mild/Moderate Special Education Practitioner Teacher Program*. For students accepted into the Practitioner Teacher Program.
2. Applicants for Special Non-Degree status must meet the following requirements:
 - a. Satisfy general admission requirements, except for the test score requirement.
 - b. Hold a baccalaureate degree from a regionally-accredited U.S. institution or its foreign equivalent.
 - c. Have satisfactory academic standing at the last institution attended.
 3. Students in Special Non-Degree status may enroll in undergraduate courses for which they have the appropriate prerequisites.
 4. Students in Special Non-Degree status may not enroll in graduate-level courses. If a student in Special Non-Degree status enrolls in a graduate-level course, that student will be dropped from the course without prior notification.
 5. Students in Special Non-Degree status wishing to change to Regular Non-Degree status or to Degree status must re-apply for admission.

105.3. Education Beyond the Traditional Master's Degree

Education Specialist – Educational Leadership

Concentrations:

Educational Leadership

Educational Technology Leadership

Master of Fine Arts – Creative Writing

105.4. Traditional Master's Degrees

MA – English

MA – Psychology

Concentrations:

Counseling Psychology

General/Experimental

MAT – Elementary Education Grades 1-5

MAT – Secondary Education Grades 6-12

MAT – Special Education Mild/Moderate Grades 1-12

MBA – Business Administration

MED – Curriculum and Instruction

Concentration:

Early Childhood Education

Elementary Education

Secondary Education

(to be added: Special Education/Mild Moderate Impairments and Educational Diagnostician)

MED – Education

Concentrations:

Special Education—Early Childhood Inclusion Specialist

Special Education—Education Diagnostician

Special Education—Curriculum Material Specialist

MED – Educational Technology Leadership

MED – Educational Leadership

MS – Instructional Technology

MS – Health and Human Performance

Concentrations:

Exercise Physiology

Health Promotion

MED – School Counseling

MENG – Engineering

Concentrations:

Chemical

Civil

Electrical

Engineering Management

Mechanical

MMEd – Music Education

MS – Environmental and Chemical Sciences

Concentrations:

Agricultural Sciences

Chemistry

Chemistry Education

Environmental Science

Environmental Science Education

MS – Mathematical Sciences

Concentrations:

Computer Science

Mathematics

Statistics

MS – Nursing

Concentrations:

Clinical Nurse Specialist

Nurse Education

Nurse Practitioner

Nursing Administration

105.5. Student Responsibility

Students are personally responsible for completing all degree requirements established by the University, the college, and the department. Students are responsible for informing themselves of these requirements. Students' major professors may not assume these responsibilities and may not substitute or waive established requirements or academic standards.

106. ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

106.1. Course Load

1. Full-time graduate students are those registered for at least 9 hours in a regular semester or for at least 6 hours in a summer session.
2. Full-time graduate students may enroll for up to 16 hours in a regular semester or for up to 9 hours in a summer session.
 - a. Students whose cumulative grade point average is 3.6 or better may enroll in 3 additional semester hours with prior approval of the major professor, the department head, and the Dean of Graduate School. This regulation applies to graduate students taking only graduate courses or a combination of graduate and undergraduate courses.
3. The maximum course load for which a student may enroll during an interim (between semesters) period is three semester hours, or one hour of graduate credit for each week of the session.

106.2. Eligibility to Continue Enrolling in Graduate Courses

Probation

Graduate students whose graduate cumulative or term grade point average falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. Once on academic probation, a graduate student will continue on probation until he/she earns a graduate term and cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher.

Suspension

Graduate students on academic probation whose term grade point average falls below 3.0 will be suspended from further graduate studies. Students who earn a grade of "F" in any graduate course will also be suspended from further graduate studies. A grade of "I" will be converted to an "F" if it is not removed by the designated date during the next regular semester in which the student is enrolled at the University (see University Calendar) or within one calendar year if the student does not enroll.

Readmission of Suspended Students

Suspended graduate students may be readmitted on probation only upon the recommendation of their academic department head and with the approval of the Dean of Graduate School. Suspended graduate students may enroll in undergraduate courses without seeking approval for readmission to Graduate School. A suspended student intending to enroll in undergraduate courses only must notify the Registrar of his/her intent. At that time, the student's status will be changed to Special Non-Degree.

106.3. Approximate Semester Cost of Attendance for Graduate Students

Tuition & Fees (Louisiana resident)	\$1,623
Tuition & Fees (Out-of-state resident)	\$4,656
Books (estimate)	\$1,000
Room & Board: (semi-private)	\$4,656 (12 month Contract)

107. FINANCIAL AID

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/admissions/finaid.asp>

107.1. Student Financial Assistance

The Office of Student Financial Aid is under the supervision of the Director of Financial Aid. One of the primary functions of this office is to administer state and federal programs which provide financial assistance to students of McNeese State University. Programs available to a graduate student include a variety of loan and campus job opportunities. A graduate Student is not eligible to receive grant assistance from state or federal sources. The type and amount of aid available to a student usually depends on need and academic achievement, although other factors may be considered.

Through a packaging concept, it is often possible to provide a student who has a high need factor with sufficient funding to cover the majority of college expenses. The University considers all applicants without regard to sex, race, or creed. Applications should be filed in the Office of Financial Aid before May 1 for the following fall semester, spring semester, and summer session. In order to be eligible to receive financial assistance, the student must maintain satisfactory academic progress as defined by the policies of McNeese State University.

107.2. Steps in Applying for Financial Assistance

The following steps should be taken in applying for financial aid:

1. Apply to the Registrar's Office for admission to the University.
2. Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This form may be obtained from the high school counselor or from the Office of Financial Aid at the McNeese campus. This form should be completed and mailed in February of each year to meet the application priority date of May 1. To apply for the 2006-2007 academic year, the student will need his/her 2005 tax return. Dependent students will need their parent's 2005 tax return.
3. Complete an MSU Data Form and send it to the Office of Financial Aid at McNeese State University. This form may be obtained from the Office of Financial Aid at McNeese or on the Web site: <http://www.mcneese.edu/admissions/finaid.asp> and must be completed each year.
4. Submit the Student Aid Report to the Office of Financial Aid at McNeese immediately. The result of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), which is the Student Aid Report, will be mailed directly to the student from the Central Processor. Students should read all the special instructions and comments listed.
5. Promptly provide all additional documentation requested by the Office of Financial Aid. Applications will not be completed until all necessary forms are received in the Office of Financial Aid. Students should allow approximately eight weeks for completing the financial aid application request process.
6. Must be in a degree seeking program and taking courses for credit hours to be considered for financial assistance.
7. Must be enrolled at least half-time or more during each semester to be considered for all federal financial aid programs. Students enrolled for less than half-time enrollment status will be considered for the Federal Pell Grant Program only.

For a more detailed description of financial assistance programs available to a graduate student, please refer to the financial aid section of the most current *McNeese State University Catalog*. A student who has questions concerning available programs or the application process should contact the Office of Financial Aid at (337) 475-5065 or 1 (800) 622-3352. The E-mail address is financialaid@mcneese.edu.

107.3. Fellowships

A limited number of McNeese State University Foundation Fellowships are available each year. Applications are available through DSGS.

107.4. Scholarships

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/admissions/scholarships/default.asp>

A limited number of out-of-state students are eligible for a small scholarship which exempts them from paying out-of-state tuition. Applications are available through DSGS.

107.5. Graduate Assistantships

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/colleges/grad/ga.asp>

107.5.a. Graduate Assistantship Policy

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/policy/gradasstn.php>

A limited number of graduate assistantships are available to qualified graduate students. Units must have graduate assistantship budget allocation in order to make appointments. Appropriate documentation indicating graduate assistantship appointments must be submitted to the Office of Academic Affairs each semester.

Minimum Qualifications. Applications for assistantships should be addressed to the head of the department in which the student will do the major work. Minimum qualifications for a student receiving a graduate assistantship appointment:

- Must be enrolled in a McNeese State University graduate program and seeking a graduate degree;
- Must be enrolled in at least six hours of graduate course work toward the degree or thesis for the semester;
- Must be in good standing (academic and otherwise) with the University.

Assistantship appointments are made to qualified graduate students on a semester by semester basis only. A student may hold a maximum of 1½ assistantships per semester provided service is proportionate. Reappointment is contingent upon satisfactory progress toward the degree and satisfactory performance of assistantship duties. Satisfactory progress toward the degree is defined as completion of a minimum of 6 hours of graduate course work each semester applicable to the degree.

Duties and Responsibilities. Duties and responsibilities expected of a graduate assistant must be communicated clearly to the student assistant by the supervisor. Assistantship employment follows the University's academic calendar (from the first day of classes through the last day of final examinations) for each term. Some departments/units may require graduate assistants to work prior to or beyond the defined academic calendar, but no more than the cumulative hours required in a normal employment term. The University requires the following service for a full assistantship:

- Teaching Graduate Assistants teach two undergraduate classes or an equivalent of lab supervision (may include more than two labs). A graduate assistant may be assigned responsibility for teaching a class only after he/she has completed at least eighteen graduate hours in the field to be taught; however, an assistant may supervise labs without having earned 18 graduate hours. Teaching assistants should consult with the department head to verify specific responsibilities for their classes and the undergraduate students they will teach; departments must supply the Visiting Lecturer and Teaching Graduate Assistant Handbook to teaching assistants.
- Research graduate assistants perform twenty hours of service per week during the semester. A research assistant may perform a combination of duties to assist with labs, instruction, or research.
- Administrative graduate assistants perform twenty hours of service per week during the semester. Administrative graduate assistants perform clerical duties and assist with administrative operations.

Unless otherwise approved by the President's Executive Staff, a full graduate assistantship consists of \$2,000 stipend per semester and exemption of one half of the tuition portion of the student's fees and exemption of non-resident fees if applicable. For administrative graduate assistants the waiver of tuition is considered taxable income.

Graduate students who resign assistantships during the semester or are terminated after the end of late registration do not reimburse the institution for the pro-rated share of their exempted tuition; however, they are ineligible for future employment as graduate assistants unless approved by the Graduate School dean. Assistantships may be revoked at any time duties are not fulfilled satisfactorily.

Because of their role as student and employee, graduate assistants assume particular responsibility for upholding the University's Student Code of Conduct. All graduate assistants should be provided a copy of the McNeese State University Graduate Student Orientation Handbook. Teaching graduate assistants must uphold responsibilities according to relevant sections of the McNeese State University Faculty/Staff Handbook. Supervisors should supply appropriate handbooks to the assistant.

Summer Session Graduate Assistants

A limited number of assistantships are available for the Summer session. Students must be enrolled in a graduate degree program for at least 3 credit hours.

107.5.b. Appointment Types

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/faculty/handbook06/> (section 319)

Graduate Assistant-Teaching

The graduate assistant teaches a course and has full responsibility for the course. The Graduate Assistant is the Instructor of Record for the course.

Graduate Assistant-Research

The graduate assistant primarily performs research assignments for a faculty member. Often the research assistant is working together with the faculty member in conducting a research project.

Graduate Assistant-Teaching Assistant

Teaching assistants usually assist faculty members in teaching their courses, but the faculty members remain responsible for and serve as the Instructors of Record for these courses. In some departments, teaching assistants may be assigned to assist a faculty member with taking roll, grading papers, conducting help sessions, etc. In other departments, teaching assistants may serve a period of apprenticeship under the supervision of a faculty member.

Graduate Assistant-Administrative

The graduate assistant performs assignments primarily of a clerical nature or supervisory nature, although he/she may be assigned other duties.

107.5.c. Appointment and Reappointment

A student only enrolled in thesis in progress may be awarded an assistantship for a maximum of three semesters. Reappointment is contingent upon continued eligibility for graduate enrollment, satisfactory progress toward meeting degree requirements, and satisfactory performance of assigned duties.

An international graduate assistant whose native language is not English may not be assigned duties requiring oral English proficiency until passing an English proficiency test.

107.5.d. Graduate Assistantship Policy – Sports Trainer

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/policy/docs/gradasspolicy.pdf>

Sports Medicine may require graduate assistants to work prior to or beyond the defined academic calendar, but no more than the cumulative hours required in a normal employment term. The qualifications, duties, and other information pertaining to a Graduate Assistantship – Sports Trainer may be found at the web address referenced above.

108. ADVISING

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/schedule/default.htm>

A graduate student meets with his major professor prior to registration each semester to schedule classes and discuss issues relevant to the requirements of his degree plan. Dates for advising periods, registration time lines and guidelines, and location of departments are provided in the *McNeese State University Class Schedule*.

109. LIBRARY

Reference: <http://www.library.mcneese.edu/>

Frazar Memorial Library houses collections and services to complement the educational and research programs of the University. The circulating book collection is housed in open stacks and is arranged by Library of Congress Classification System. An official identification card must be presented to an authorized person in the Circulation Department in order to check out materials. Non-circulating materials include government documents, periodicals, reference and archival materials.

The Library is a charter member of the Louisiana Academic Library Information Network Consortium (LALINC). This affiliation immeasurably enhances the number of electronic services, subscriptions, and databases provided by McNeese. Many of these electronic resources are available to users from remote locations via the library web page.

The Reference Department houses general and specialized materials to support appropriate academic disciplines. Among these works are the traditional paper indexes, abstracts, encyclopedias, and other reference resources. For additional information about this or other departments in the Frazar Memorial Library, contact the department at (337) 475-5725.

110. BOOKSTORE

Reference: http://www.mcneese.edu/bookstore/msu_bookstore.html

The University Bookstore is owned and operated by the University. The most important service of the bookstore is to supply textbooks required for courses offered. A textbook may be returned for a full refund when certain conditions are met: the student does not mark in his book until he is certain that he will not return the textbook and books are returned to the Bookstore by the date posted as the last day for full refund. A student can also get back money when he sells books during the week of final exams. The Bookstore is open for extended hours during the first week of classes each semester in order to better serve evening students. Normal hours for the Bookstore during fall and spring semesters are 7:45 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except during official university holidays. During the summer session store hours are 7:15 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. For additional information, contact the University Bookstore at (337) 475-5494.

111. UNIVERSITY POLICE

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/police/index.asp>

The University Police Department provides police and services twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week to all McNeese students, faculty, staff, and visitors. These services generally consist of police protective and investigative services, information, parking assistance, and escort service.

University police officers are sworn and commissioned by the Louisiana Department of Public Safety as police officers with the full range of police powers. Police officers are responsible for a full range of public safety services, including crime reports, investigations, medical emergencies, fire emergencies, hazardous waste emergencies, traffic accidents, parking violations, enforcement of laws regulating consumption of alcoholic beverages, the use of controlled substances, weapons, and all other incidents requiring police assistance.

University police escort students to their destination on campus if requested. Prior arrangements must be made through the University Police Office. Also, university police offer assistance to motorists such as providing jumpstarts to vehicles.

Potential criminal activity and other emergencies on the McNeese campus can be reported directly to the University Police Office by any student, faculty, staff, or visitor. University police can be reached by dialing (337) 475-5711; by dialing 111 for an on-campus emergency; or by dialing 911 for an off-campus emergency.

111.1. Vehicle Registration

All students, including those enrolled in evening classes, who operate vehicles on the campus must register their vehicles and properly affix an official university vehicle registration permit within 24 hours following the completion of the registration in any given semester. Vehicle registration is handled at the University Police Office during regular business hours. The student must have a paid registration receipt and current vehicle registration to register a vehicle. Information about McNeese parking regulations is furnished at the time of vehicle registration.

111.2. Parking

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/police/parking.asp>.

Parking is permitted only in designated parking areas during restricted hours (7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday). Students must park only in zones which their university parking permit entitles them to use. For more information regarding parking information and hours of lot restrictions please see: <http://www.mcneese.edu/police/parking.asp>.

112. INFIRMARY

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/parents/infirmary.htm>

McNeese State University operates the Dr. Thomas Henry Watkins Infirmary for all students carrying seven (7) or more semester hours. Nurses are on duty in the Infirmary between 7:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday in the Fall and Spring semester, and between 7:00 a.m. and 4:15 p.m. Monday through Friday during the Summer semester. Physicians are available 5 days per week. The infirmary is located between Frazer Memorial Library and Kirkman Hall. Additional information is available by calling (337) 475-5748.

113. HOUSING

Reference: <http://www.mcneesereslife.com/>

Student housing on the McNeese Campus is provided by Ambling Property Management. For information on availability and rates, please contact Ambling at (337) 562-6504.

114. COUNSELING CENTER

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/administration/vpsse/counselingctr.asp>

The Counseling Center assists students, faculty, and staff with regard to their personal development. Services are available to all students in the University. The Center assists students with personal adjustment and also offers marital counseling. Psychological, aptitude, and vocational testing are available. A student is encouraged to telephone (337) 475-5136 for an appointment, but walk-in appointments are available as time permits.

The Counseling Center is open between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, throughout the calendar year except official university holidays.

115. DISABLED STUDENT SERVICES

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/administration/vpsse/swd/default.php>

Any student with a disability is encouraged to contact the Office of Services for students with Disabilities in Kaufman, Room 119 (337)475-5916. It is each student's responsibility to register with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities when requesting a reasonable accommodation.

116. RECREATION COMPLEX

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/rec/>

McNeese Recreation Complex includes an Olympic-size swimming pool, racquetball courts, basketball courts, weight rooms, indoor track, steam/sauna rooms, shower/locker rooms, and intramural playing fields. Equipment rental options are available. The student must have a valid identification card to enter the building. The Recreation

Complex is open Monday-Friday, 6:00-9:00 AM and Noon-6:00 PM, and Saturday and Sunday, 12:00-6:00 PM. Additional information on the Recreation Complex is available by telephone at (337) 475-5370.

117. INTERNATIONAL STUDENT AFFAIRS

Reference: <http://www.mcneese.edu/international/default2.htm>

International graduate students must maintain a full load of courses (9 credit hours) at all times, except during the summer term (unless the summer term is a student's first term at McNeese State University). Failure to maintain 9 credit hours per semester may cause a student to become "out-of status" with the USCIS. If an international graduate student needs to drop below full-time, the student must have prior approval from the International Student Affairs Officer who will make the appropriate notation in SEVIS if the student is eligible. Such prior approval also applies to students in their last semester that may need less than 9 credit hours in order to graduate.

In order to maintain status, international students must be aware that they may not work more than 20 hours per week on campus. The 20 hours per week limit includes any employment that may be related to a graduate assistantship. An international student may be eligible for off-campus employment as part of an internship (Curricular Practical Training), if the work is part of a stated degree program or is part of a credit-bearing class within the student's degree program in which the student is enrolled. International students are also eligible to apply for up to one year of Optional Practical Training (OPT) upon completion of a degree program, though the application must be submitted to the USCIS prior to graduation.

International graduate students are expected to meet the same academic standards as all other graduate students. Nevertheless, because of the immigration regulations, international students must be very cautious to make normal academic progress. Please note that suspension is not a legitimate justification for the extension of an I-20, nor may an international student legally remain inside the United States on a student visa during a suspension period.

Additional information for international graduate students is available from the International Student Affairs Officer at (337) 475-5243.