

## **Faculty Orientation Document 2022 Overview of the Akamai Degree Process**

### **How Graduate Students Progress Through Their Programs**

The following summary of procedures explains how students progress through their degree program from the inquiry stage through the finishing activities. The information that follows should help Akamai faculty get a clear understanding of how staff and faculty interrelate with the students and where the responsibilities rest as students progress through their programs. The Faculty Handbook provides additional information related to each stage in the degree process. [Faculty Handbook Access Page](#)

#### **Step #1: Inquiry Stage**

The inquiry stage is a delicate situation for the University, due to laws governing required disclosures and pre-enrollment information provided to inquirers. There are a number of University constituents involved in communications with inquirers, so it is absolutely essential that all parties have complete and accurate understanding of the expectations we are under. . The University policies and procedures related to working with student inquirers fall under the supervision of the University President. It is intended that all involved will not deviate from the procedures, as many issues are governed by State and federal laws, related to wrong information, misleading, missing, or erroneous details which can result in a great deal of confusion or legal circumstances for the University. The State of Hawaii is quite litigious with regard to its statutes governing private degree granting institutions (HRS446E).

The inquiry stage begins upon the first contact by the University with a potential student who makes contact by email, telephone, fax or by personal visit. It is intended that the University staff make this first contact and all subsequent follow-ups as personal, warm and comprehensive as possible. It is only through careful dialogue with inquirers that the University is able to provide sufficient information about our programs, policies and procedures, build a lasting rapport, encourage inquirers to communicate with faculty, and ultimately submit their applications.

Akamai office staff and authorized recruitment staff must provide sufficient information and clarity about the degree offerings, entry requirements, and admission procedures, degree program requirements and transfer credit policies. Necessary preliminary information that by law must be issued and discussed with potential students prior to their admission include Hawaii mandated public disclosures about accreditation, ADA and Civil Rights disclosures, degree entry standards and admission guidelines, tuition guidelines including refund policies and procedures, degree requirements and minimum required duration, and guidelines related to awarding of transfer credit. These elements should be left for the central administration to take care of.

The University acknowledges that provision of information and materials in and of itself is insufficient, if it does not effectively bring about an exchange between the inquirer and the University's senior faculty in the field of interest. All communications with inquirers include an invitation for the inquirer to visit the university website and to get back in touch with the office for the purpose of making referrals to essential University faculty. Office staff members are asked to copy initial communications with degree inquirers to the appropriate program faculty

leadership. This permits the most effective response to questions and concerns relative to the expectations for the degree program under discussion.

The University asks faculty to permit the office staff to carry out their administrative responsibilities, and serve only as an advisor to the inquirer related to the content, concentrations, and professional potential for the degrees. While it is acceptable for faculty leadership to discuss with inquirers the available degree levels and recommend a path through the program, we kindly ask that faculty not make decisions at this stage related to transfer credits or promises about other means for award of credit equivalencies. These matters are handled in a formal manner, as the first activity after the students register, during the study plan and timeline processes.

### **Step #2: Application**

This first official step of the student is to submit a complete application online including uploading supportive materials for review by the Admissions Committee. The Application and instructions are available online <https://www.akamai.university/student-enroll--pay.html>

- ✚ Cover letter identifying your proposed field of study and describing, in detail your career and research interests, your college background, training and career experience
- ✚ Official copies of your college transcripts, training records and other academic documents sent directly from your educational institutions to the Office of Admission (student copies may be uploaded initially)
- ✚ Two current letters of recommendation related to your prior career and college performance sent by the reference to the Office of Admission
- ✚ Complete and up-to-date resume or CV (may be sent by electronic mean)
- ✚ Copy of government issued identification card or passport information pages
- ✚ Verification of submission of nonrefundable application fee (US\$50).

### **Step #3: The Admission Committee**

The Admission Committee includes the Admission Officer, Chief Administrative Officer, and the Program Director in each area of study. Once the Admission Officer has gathering the required materials (as listed above) for Admission Committee Review, vital materials are prepared and sent to the Program Director via email or a link to the University DropBox, together with the Academic Admission Review Form. This form permits the Program Director to recommend acceptance or rejection of the candidate or to submit special requirements to be part of the acceptance. This form also permits the Program Director to identify the most appropriate Committee Chair to guide the student through the program of study.

Following a favorable decision by the Admissions Committee, the Admission officer will provide students with a letter of acceptance with information to guide their formal registration. The letter of acceptance will identify their primary mentor, along with the degree level and the degree major and minor into which students are accepted. Documents needed for formal enrollment are provided to the student at this time.

### **Step #3: Registration**

Once the student receives the letter of acceptance, they may register. In their acceptance package, they receive their letter, a registration form, the program overview, and the Tuition Agreement. To formally enter the University, students need to submit their Registration materials with the down payment toward their tuition. The Registration form and instructions are available online. The Tuition and Fees are clearly outlined and discussed in a special section online. <http://www.akamaiuniversity.us/TuitionandFees.html>

### **Step #4: Study Plan and Timeline**

After registration, students will work with their primary faculty advisor in building the individualized Study Plan and timeline for completion of their degree. The Study Plan presents the course of study and the timeline, presenting a schedule for completion, and lists acceptable transfer classes will be allowed. The Study Plan forms and instructions are available online.

- ✚ Appropriate credits transfer from accredited institutions by submission of formal transcripts and information about class content for faculty review
- ✚ Credits earned from challenge examination related to classes that are part of the student's program
- ✚ Credits earned from review of portfolio of college level learning from professional experiences related to classes that are part of the student's program

### **Step #5: Tuition Agreements and Tuition Adjustments**

Once their Study Plan has been approved, students will be provided a Tuition Payment Agreement, which will outline the tuition reductions authorized by their primary faculty advisor and documented in the Study Plan. Tuition, fees and reduction allowances are discussed in the Tuition and Fees section. Once students have submitted the Tuition Payment Agreement, students will be authorized to enroll for their first course(s).

### **Step #6: Class and Tutorial Enrollments**

To begin their studies, students will need to submit the Tuition Agreement and their first Course Enrollment form. The Course Enrollment form and instructions are available online. Students should submit subsequent course enrollment forms as they progress through their programs. We ask that students submit succeeding Course Enrollment forms at least 30 days before their scheduled start date.

### **Step #7: Completion of Classwork**

Upon enrollment in each course, study guides in the form of course syllabi will be prepared and issued to students by their course instructor. An example of the University's course syllabus is provided online. Following completion of each course, students will receive Grade Reports from their instructor. A sample of the Grade Report is available online. Upon completion of their academic coursework and before starting their final project, students will be authorized to schedule their Comprehensive Final Examination.

### **Step #8: Comprehensive Examination (Final Exams)**

On the scheduled dates, students will participate with their primary faculty advisor and a second reviewer in the Comprehensive Examination. This examination usually includes both written and

oral components. Upon completion of this requirement, and only upon its completion, students will be Advanced to Candidacy and allowed to begin their Final Project. For the most part, exam monitor (invigilation) is not required, since the oral must be a synchronous communication between student and instructor.

**Step #9: Final Project Proposal**

Following their Comprehensive examination, students prepare a Proposal for Research following the class syllabus and published guidelines of the University. The Student Handbook includes information to guide the preparation of their Proposal. Their primary faculty advisor may provide additional written information.

**Step #10: Conducting the Final Project**

Once their Proposal for Research has been approved, students will be authorized to begin their Research Project, following the class syllabus and published guidelines of the University. When their research is completed and students have prepared their research manuscript (thesis or dissertation, thesis, or senior project) according to University guidelines, their primary faculty advisor and another reviewer(s) will read their project manuscript and prepare questions and commentary. Students will then be notified to schedule an oral review of their project

**Step #11: Oral Review of Project**

On the scheduled date, students will participate with their primary faculty advisor and other member of their Review Committee in an Oral Review of the Project. The review is normally conducted by video conference, telephone conference or other electronic means. Following the oral review, their primary faculty advisor will prepare a set of final expectations for their attention, authorizing students to complete their final manuscript.

**Step #12: Final Approval**

Once their manuscript has been approved, students will prepare and submit their manuscript for final approval by their primary faculty advisor. A Degree Record Form is used for gaining formal approval for the primary faculty advisor. The senior administration will then review the permanent archival records of the student for completeness and provide final approval signifying successful completion of their degree program.