

# IDT Graduate Manual

## Graduate Advising and Degree Planning

### Graduate Advisor and Advising Committee

**Advisor:** Once admitted into the program, the IDT Graduate Program Coordinator serves as your advisor. The coordinator will guide you on the following matters:

- Selection of the first semester's courses.
- Transfer of appropriate graduate course work completed at other institutions or departments.
- Completion of a Graduate Degree Plan.
- Timely progression toward degree completion (All course work must be completed within six consecutive years of the date of admission.)
- Readmission will not be considered if 10 years or more have lapsed since the student completed courses.
- Maintenance of scholarship and academic standards for you. (A GPA of 3.0 or better is required and no more than six hours of graduate work with a grade of C or lower is permitted for degree candidacy.)
- Selection of a portfolio, applied project, or thesis as an exit option.
- Selection of your Advising Committee for the exit option.

**Advising Committee:** A student submits a request for a graduate committee when approaching the conclusion of the coursework. One faculty member will serve as the chair of the advising committee. The committee chair will direct the portfolio, applied project, or thesis planning and subsequent activities. The chair will assist with:

- Formation of plans for exit option (All incomplete coursework appearing on the student's graduate degree plan must be finished before commencing the exit option.)
- Supervision of exit option and subsequent writing.
- Program and university procedures for completing and defending the exit option activities, and performing the commensurate graduation/degree completion activities.

### Graduate Degree Plan

When you have completed 12 hours of classes, you must submit a **Graduate Degree Plan**. The IDT degree allows maximum course selection flexibility depending on your educational or technical background and career goals. Sample Graduate Degree Plans are provided on the IDT website to give you some ideas for course selection. These plans represent a variety of backgrounds and career goals. Keep in mind that many variations from these samples are possible in consultation with the IDT Graduate Program Coordinator. In addition, several other courses not listed on any of the sample plans may also be added to your plan.

- IDT 591 Independent Study (1-4, repeatable to 6 with change in topic). This course may be selected if you have specialized interests not addressed by regular courses, or you wish to explore topics leading to your final project.
- IDT 620 Internship (3 sh). This opportunity is available to graduate students who have completed at least 12 hours of IDT coursework and wish to gain practical experience with a company, school district, or other institution involved with instructional design and technology.

### Transfer Credits

If approved by the IDT Graduate Program Coordinator and the Graduate School, a student may transfer a maximum of six semester hours of approved graduate credit from an accredited institution. All courses must have a grade of B or better. Coursework that was used to meet degree requirements for a degree at a different institution will not be allowed to transfer to Western Illinois University. Approved relevant courses taken in other departments may also count in the Directed Electives area of the degree plan.

Changes to an approved Graduate Plan can be made by submitting a Petition to Change Graduate Degree Plan form.

### **Course Selection Recommendations**

Selecting which courses to place in the degree plan is only one piece of the degree planning process. The second part is deciding on your course sequence. Following are some guidelines to assist you in making these decisions:

- Take IDT 500 in the first semester of coursework. This course is an introduction to the IDT graduate program, facilities, faculty, and skills needed to be successful in the program.
- Take IDT 505 or IDT 510 in the first semester of coursework. Take the other course in the following semester.
- Note the IDT course prerequisites and format (online or weekend academy) listed in the Graduate Catalog and the tentative course rotation cycle provided on the IDT website. The course rotation is based on the idea of offering prerequisite courses the semester prior to courses that require them. Not all courses are offered every semester.

### **Independent Study Guidelines**

Registration for IDT 591 is only permitted when the student has completed at least 12 hours of IDT coursework (including IDT 500, IDT 505, and IDT 510), has developed an idea and secured permission from a supervising faculty member, and then filled out the Independent Study Request Form. The form must be signed by the supervising faculty member before submission to the IDT Graduate Program Coordinator for final approval. The coordinator's signature is permission to register.

### **Incomplete Coursework**

The determination of a grade awarded to a student in the Instructional Design and Technology Program is the sole responsibility of each instructor. The grade assigned is based upon such elements as: timely completion of assignments, contributions to class discussions, performance on examinations, quality of oral and written reports, or technology-based products, and the quality and appropriateness of the student's overall performance. The grade awarded is subject to the Grade Appeal Policy of the School of Graduate Studies.

It is the program's policy that an incomplete grade ("I") may only be assigned when warranted by special or unusual circumstances beyond the control of the student, as long as it is consistent with the "incomplete" policy stated on the course syllabus. If the instructor approves the "I," then the student must complete a contract with the sponsoring faculty member to complete the work by an agreed-upon date.

Due to the changing nature of the IDT field, contracts to complete coursework are normally granted for one to three months. All incomplete coursework appearing on a student's degree plan must be completed before a student can commence the final project for graduation or participate in an internship.

### **Course Revalidation**

The School of Graduate Studies requires that courses older than six years must be revalidated or removed from the graduate plan. Course revalidation is accomplished when the course's faculty member reviews the student's work history and professional experiences to determine the best method for validation. This may include a competency examination, portfolio development, additional coursework, etc. When revalidation is successfully completed, the evaluator will write a letter to the IDT Graduate Program Coordinator recommending revalidation approval. The coordinator will act on the request and so inform the School of Graduate Studies.

## **Overview of Portfolio, Applied Project, and Thesis Exit Options**

***Portfolio Exit Option:*** A portfolio includes projects that showcase the knowledge and skills learned by the student in the IDT Program. Students interested in this option are often interested in production-oriented careers and wish to create a professional-quality portfolio to feature their accomplishments. Items for the portfolio must demonstrate skills learned in at least four courses in the program. Students choosing the portfolio must complete 27 hours of coursework and the three-hour portfolio (IDT 603).

***Applied Project Exit Option:*** An applied project often involves the development of an instructional unit or product, testing it with a group of learners or other relevant population, and performing formative and summative evaluation of it. The applied project can also focus on applied research, in which it focuses on solving or investigating a site-specific problem; or on an applied evaluation project in which it focuses on evaluating a large-scale program (school-based, industry-based, or software-based) in order to make a judgement about its merit. Students choosing an applied project must complete 27 hours of coursework including the IDT 595 course, and the three-hour IDT applied project (IDT 600).

***Thesis Exit Option:*** A thesis is an experimental or qualitative research study. Students choosing a thesis must complete 24 hours of coursework including the IDT 595 course, and the three-hour thesis (IDT 605).

### **Internship (IDT 620)**

Eligibility requirements, procedures, and guidelines for participating in an IDT internship experience are described in detail in the Internship section IDT website. In general, the internship is an optional experience open to students who have a 3.4 GPA and have completed at least 12 hours of graduate coursework.

An application to do an internship must be completed at least three months prior to the anticipated date when the internship is expected to begin. The internship itself requires a minimum of 200 hours of professional fieldwork in a place other than a student's current place of employment.