



Chapter Seven

Federal Compliance

Future Generations Graduate School is in compliance with all federal requirements. The school recognizes that compliance with stated requirements is essential to its integrity and that the implementation of policies and procedures is necessary to maintain its reliability.

Credits, Program Length, and Tuition (Policy I.C.7)

Future Generations awards semester hours of credit for academic work completed in the master's program. The fixed curriculum offers 37 credit hours of courses, with the possibility of two additional credits for language study. Thirty-seven credits are required for graduation. Table 7.1 is an analysis of minimum student workload for online, residential, and practicum courses. Although time commitment varies with student ability, and project work associated with the practicum is undervalued, this analysis outlines the program's expectations. On average, students in the master's program can expect to put in 46.9 hours for each credit hour completed. This is slightly above the Carnegie unit of credit standard of 45 hours of student work per semester credit hour.

The Future Generations master's program takes two years to complete. Within the two-year period, there are 25 months of active online or residential instruction. For the practicum, work is done alongside instructional work or during those months when classes are not in session. Students enter and are expected to complete the program as a class cohort. To provide flexibility to accommodate student schedules yet to simultaneously maintain high academic standards, students are permitted to take the time needed to complete a quality practicum, even if this requires using a year or more beyond the conclusion of their formal coursework. Similarly, opportunities exist for students to withdraw for a term or more and complete their degrees with the next entering class.

Tuition for the master's program is \$17,500 per year. This amount includes books and teaching materials, as well as room, board, and all in-country academic related costs incurred during the four residential sessions. As seen in Table 7.2, both the credit hours needed to complete the program and the tuition charged are well within the range required for other institutions offering master's degree programs.

Student Complaints

The Future Generations master's program invites students to offer comments, suggestions, and complaints in several different ways at numerous times during the two-year program. At any time, students may express their concerns to the registrar or dean via phone call, e-mail, or in direct discussion. Also, students are invited to express their concerns to faculty teaching individual courses. Depending on the nature of the concern, a faculty member or administrator contacted may address the student directly, or the issue may be referred to the appropriate person, normally the registrar. If the issue is deemed serious, or if it is a request for variance on a Graduate School policy, a signed letter is required and forwarded to the Academic Council for resolution. Details of policies and how they operate are provided to students in writing in the Student Handbook, which they receive upon enrollment in the program.

Table 7.1 ANALYSIS OF INSTRUCTIONAL TIME AND CREDIT HOUR ALLOCATION FOR MASTERS PROGRAM COURSES

Courses	Online Credits and Hours	Length of Term in Months	Residential Credits and Hours	Site for Residential Studies	Practicum Credits and Hours
Community-Based Development					
Introduction to Community Change and Conservation	1 credit; 40 hours	5	1 credit; 40 hours	India	
Nature Conservation and Management	1 credit; 50 hours	5	1 credit; 56 hours	United States	
Going to Scale with Community Development	1 credit; 50 hours	5	1 credit; 40 hours	Peru	
Globalization, Localization, and Sustainability					
Sustainable Development	1 credit; 58 hours	5	1 credit; 32 hours	India	
Food and Water Security	1 credit; 50 hours	5	1 credit; 40 hours	Peru	
Human Ecology	1 credit; 30 hours	6	1 credit; 96 hours	Nepal/ Tibet	
Community Change Skills					
Healthy People, Healthy Communities	1 credit; 50 hours	5	1 credit; 40 hours	India	
Leadership and Organization Dynamics	1 credit; 50 hours	5	1 credit; 40 hours	United States	
Social Change and Conflict Transformation	1 credit; 35 hours	5	1 credit; 64 hours	United States	
Inter-Cultural Communicative Competence	(0–2 credits)				
Monitoring and Evaluating Community Change					
Applications of Nonprofit Management	2 credits; 90 hours	6			
Empowerment	1 credit; 50 hours	5	1 credit; 40 hours	Peru	
Pedagogy of Place: Home and India		5	1 credit; 55 hours	India	
Pedagogy of Place: United States		5	1 credit; 45 hours	United States	
Pedagogy of Place: Peru		5	1 credit; 45 hours	Peru	
Pedagogy of Place: Nepal and Tibet		6	1 credit; 45 hours	Nepal/ Tibet	
Applied Practicum Work					
Practicum: Research Design and Methods		5		India	2 credits; 90 hours
Practicum: Prospectus Design		5		United States	2 credits; 90 hours
Practicum: Applied Research I		5		Peru	2 credits; 90 hours
Practicum: Applied Research II		6		Nepal/ Tibet	2 credits; 90 hours
Synthesis and Integration	1 credit; 60 hours	6	1 credit; 40 hours	Nepal/ Tibet	1 credit; 35 hours
TOTALS 37 credits (+ up to two language credits), 1,736 hours; 46.92 hours/credit	13 credits; 623 hours (0–2 credits for language)	25 months	15 credits; 718 hours		9 credits; 395 hours

Table 7.2 COMPARISON OF CREDIT HOURS AND TUITION FOR MASTER’S LEVEL EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

University	Credits in MA Program	Tuition per Year
American University	42	\$26,727
Future Generations Graduate School	37	\$17,500
Harvard University	32	\$36,520
James Madison University	38	\$20,352
Marshall University	36	\$14,656
University of Virginia	30	\$22,140
West Virginia University	36	\$19,722
Yale University	39	\$32,500

Most issues and concerns expressed by students are included in the student’s file and in a file in the registrar’s office. The response to the student is included in the file as well. If the Academic Council handles the matter, decisions are recorded in the minutes of the Council and copies of all communications from and to the student are filed in the registrar’s office. An examination of the registrar’s file and the Academic Council minutes will provide a full exposition of the issues raised by students and their resolution.

A formal grievance procedure has been formulated and is included in the Student Handbook. This procedure includes the formation of a grievance committee and the procedures to be followed in resolving the issue (exhibit 7.1).

Transfer Policy

Under special circumstances, a student may receive credit for graduate work completed at another accredited graduate institution. Six semester hours are the maximum amount granted. Appropriate course either complimentary to the Future Generations degree or directed a student’s special academic needs form essential criteria in the consideration. Students must complete the Petition for Transfer of Credit and submit it to the Registrar for discussion at a forthcoming faculty meeting. When the petition has been voted on by the faculty, the decision will be conveyed by letter from the Dean. The guidelines are as follows:

- Credit is not granted for more than the face-value credit assigned by the host institution.
- The lowest grade normally accepted for transfer credit is B.
- A copy of the catalog course description must accompany the petition upon submission.
- No credit is given for courses completed toward another degree.

This policy is available to students in the Academic Catalog and on the school Web site.

Verification of Student Identity

Future Generations Graduate School has a system in place for verification of student identity. The online portion of this program is presented through Moodle. Moodle is a free and open source e-learning software platform and is designed to help educators create online courses with opportunities for rich interaction. Students must log into Moodle with a user ID and password every time they do online work (exhibit 7.2). Also, instructors are generally able to determine a student's identity by his or her writing style.

As new identification technologies are developed and become more sophisticated, less expensive and more mainstream, Future Generations Graduate School anticipates developing a more secure system and will not use any technology that may interfere with the privacy of their students.

Title IV Program and Related Responsibilities

As required, Future Generations Graduate School complies with the Title IV requirements of the Higher Education Reauthorization Act as amended in 1998.

The Future Generations financial aid office has applied to become eligible to offer federal financial aid; waiting for final approval from the U.S. Department of Education. Future Generations Graduate School plans to participate in the Federal Perkins Loan Program, the Federal Family Education Loan Program, and the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program. Once approved, the school will adhere to all policies and procedures set forth by the U.S. Department of Education.

The Graduate School publishes information in both printed and online formats. The course catalog, the Student Handbook (exhibits 7.3 and 7.4), and the school Web site (www.future.org/graduate-school) contain the following required information:

- Satisfactory academic progress for financial aid
- Refund policy
- Procedures for withdrawing
- Disability services
- Degree, curriculum, and educational opportunities
- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
- Course Descriptions
- Faculty Credentials
- Drug and alcohol-free campus policy
- Transfer of credit policy

Federal Compliance Visits to Off-Campus Locations

Given the unique nature of our blended learning pedagogy, there is no physical place where students complete more than 50 percent of their degree requirements. All residential sites would qualify to be considered as course locations. As part of this evaluation for accreditation, the Nepal residential site is to be visited by two members of our Peer Review team.

Institutional Disclosures and Advertising and Recruitment Materials

Future Generations Graduate School accurately reports its affiliation status with the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association in all major publications. Other examples of marketing materials referencing accredited status include the Strategic Plan and recruiting materials. Future Generations Graduate School also prominently publishes accreditation contact information in all pertinent documents and on its Web site at www.future.org/graduate-school.

Relationship with Other Accrediting Agencies and with State Regulatory Boards

The Future Generations Graduate School does not hold any professional accreditations nor does it hold any dual institutional accreditations.

Future Generations Graduate School has been granted authorization from the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission to operate as an institution of higher education with the offering of a master's degree in Applied Conservation and Development (exhibit 7.5). Future Generations accurately reports its affiliation with the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission in all major publications and on its Web site at www.future.org/graduate-school.

Public Notification of Comprehensive Evaluation Visit and Third Party Comment

Future Generations Graduate School gives careful attention to disseminating information about the self-study and the HLC visit to its constituencies. A public notice was placed on the graduate school's Web site, and appropriate advertisements were purchased to place the notice in local newspapers (exhibit 7.6).

Summary

Future Generations Graduate School is in compliance with all federal requirements. The school recognizes that compliance with stated requirements is essential to its integrity and that the implementation of policies and procedures is necessary to maintain its reliability.