

# Student Handbook

2010



AMERICAN  
GRADUATE  
UNIVERSITY

733 North Dodsworth Avenue  
Covina, California 91724  
Phone (626) 966-4576; FAX (626) 915-1709  
E-Mail: [info@agu.edu](mailto:info@agu.edu)  
Website: [www.agu.edu](http://www.agu.edu)

Copyright 2010  
American Graduate University

All Rights Reserved



As you travel through your studies with American Graduate University you will have many questions. These questions may occur after business hours. If you have a question and we aren't available, your first step should be to review this Handbook. It has been designed to anticipate the issues faced by our students. You can also review the FAQs listed on our website at [www.agu.edu](http://www.agu.edu).

Remember we are only an email ([info@agu.edu](mailto:info@agu.edu)) or toll-free phone call (877-351-9060) away. Please carefully review the University contact list included in this Handbook (pages 5 and 6) and email or call us. We're here to help.

AGU Staff and Faculty

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>General Information</b> .....	4
University Mission .....	4
About the University.....	4
University Objectives.....	4
University Catalog & Student Bulletins .....	5
School Calendar .....	5
Accreditation and Approvals .....	5
Affiliations .....	5
University Contacts.....	5
Faculty .....	6
Advanced Standing (Transfer Credit) .....	6
Course Challenge (Testing Out).....	7
Student Privacy Policy (FERPA) .....	7
Complaints Policy .....	7
Student Portal.....	7
On-Line Library Services.....	8
<b>Financial Information</b> .....	9
Methods of Payment .....	9
Tuition Assistance .....	9
Tuition Assistance Restrictions.....	10
Veterans Administration (VA) Benefits .....	11
Tuition Payment for VA Users .....	11
Starting VA Benefits.....	11
VA Benefit Level.....	11
Refund Policy .....	12
<b>Registering for a Course</b> .....	13
Course Schedules.....	13
Course Registration.....	13
Course Payment.....	13
Shipment of Course Materials .....	13
<b>Taking Your Course</b> .....	14
Initial Actions.....	14
Technology Requirements.....	14
Course Instructor.....	14
Coursewebs Online Testing Site.....	14
Course Package.....	14
Student Enrollment Agreement.....	15
Term of Enrollment Agreement .....	15
Multiple Course Registrations.....	15
Study Reference Guide .....	15
Application Lessons .....	15
<b>Beginning Your Coursework</b> .....	16
Development of Study Skills.....	16
The Five-Step Study Method .....	16
<b>Answering the Subject Examinations and Application Lessons</b> .....	17
Tips for Completing an Application Lesson.....	17
Using the Online Examination System.....	18
Confirming and Correcting.....	20

<b>Completing Your Course</b> .....	21
The Final Course Examination .....	21
Proctored Final Examinations.....	21
Other Final Examinations.....	22
How to Prepare for the Final Examination .....	22
Submission of the Non-Proctored Final Examination.....	23
Examination Results.....	23
Course Evaluations .....	24
Program Transfer.....	25
Transferability of AGU Credit.....	25
Transcripts .....	25
<b>Grades</b> .....	26
Course Grades.....	26
Incomplete Grade .....	26
Re-Enrollment Requirements.....	26
Academic Progress - Non-VA Students .....	26
Course Completion Requirements.....	26
Extensions .....	27
Addition/Withdrawal .....	27
Leave of Absence Request.....	27
Probation and Dismissal.....	27
<b>Final Degree Program Requirements</b> .....	28
Comprehensive Examination.....	28
Project.....	28
<b>Academic Integrity</b> .....	29
<b>Graduation</b> .....	30
Graduation Requirements .....	30
Alumni .....	30
Delta Epsilon Tau International Honor Society .....	30
<b>Appendix 1 - Course List</b> .....	32
<b>Appendix 2 - Preparing for a Case Study</b> .....	33
<b>Appendix 3 - VA Academic Progress Requirements</b> .....	36
<b>Appendix 4 - Project Guidelines for the MAM, MCM, MSM, and MPM</b> Degree Programs.....	37
<b>Appendix 5 - Project Guidelines for the MBA Degree Program</b> .....	41

# **GENERAL INFORMATION**

## **UNIVERSITY MISSION**

The mission of American Graduate University is to develop and deliver quality graduate education at a reasonable cost in the areas of acquisition and contract management, project/program management, supply management, and overall business management that meets and exceeds the needs of its students.

## **ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY**

American Graduate University was founded in 1976. The University offers a whole vehicle of education that operates outside the campus and classroom tradition. The University is uniquely qualified to offer courses and degree programs in the fields of acquisition management, contract management, project/program management and business management. It has a well-defined and structured curriculum, an excellent faculty, an extensive proprietary collection of textbooks and course materials, and an on-going dissemination research program.

## **UNIVERSITY OBJECTIVES**

The general objectives of the University are to provide each student with:

1. A foundation in the general management principles applicable to the operation of any business and their specific application to the areas of project/program management, acquisition management, or supply management.
2. A more complete comprehension of his or her own present organizational role and responsibilities in relation to business as a whole, and to the total economic, political, technological and social environment.
3. Knowledge of the importance of management and leadership in business.
4. An increased ability to research and solve problems independently.
5. A recognition of the proper relationship of the principles in a subject field to the changing techniques used to implement them.
6. Increased ability in critical analysis, and analytical, communication, quantitative and synthesizing skills.
7. A combination of breadth in the total knowledge area, with a detailed, saleable amount of depth in functional specialty areas.

## UNIVERSITY CATALOG & STUDENT BULLETINS

When you were accepted into your AGU program you were sent a current copy of the University catalog in effect at the time of your acceptance. The University may change its policies, procedures, courses and degree or certificate programs at its sole discretion. However, you are held to the curriculum requirements that were in effect when you were accepted. Maintain a copy of this catalog as well as the Student Record Sheet that was sent to you in your acceptance package. This record includes the required curriculum for your degree or certificate program.

The most current edition of the University catalog is kept on the University website ([www.agu.edu](http://www.agu.edu)). As necessary, AGU will revise policies and procedures. The changes will be noted in the Student Center of the AGU website under "Student Bulletins." You should check the Student Center periodically for announcements and policy changes.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR

American Graduate University operates under a continuous enrollment policy. As such, students may enroll in distance education courses at any time. The University offices will be closed on the following days in 2010: May 31, July 5, September 6, November 25-26, December 24-January 2, 2011.

## ACCREDITATION AND APPROVALS

American Graduate University's education programs are accredited by the *Accrediting Commission of the Distance Education and Training Council* (DETC). The Accrediting Commission of DETC is listed by the U.S. Department of Education as a nationally recognized accrediting agency and is also a recognized member of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation. The University also has full institutional approval from the California Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education to grant the degrees.

## AFFILIATIONS

The University has a strategic partnership with the Defense Acquisition University to offer DOD personnel the opportunity to credit their DAU courses toward a certificate program or graduate degree. AGU is an education partner of the National Contract Management Association. AGU is a Registered Global Education Provider of the Project Management Institute. AGU is also a member of Servicemembers Opportunity College and is a Military Friendly School.

## UNIVERSITY CONTACTS

The administrative offices of the American Graduate University are located at 733 North Dodsworth Avenue, Covina, California 91724. You may contact the University by e-mail ([info@agu.edu](mailto:info@agu.edu)) or phone (626) 966-4576, (877) 351-9060 (toll free). Administration office hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (Pacific Standard Time).

The following are personnel contacts for the University:

**Registrar** - *Debbie McDonald*, Ext. 1001; (626) 915-1709 (fax); [debbiemcdonald@agu.edu](mailto:debbiemcdonald@agu.edu) - General information, course registrations, course payments, training forms, course shipments, change of address.

**Admissions** - *Marie Sirney*, Ext. 1003; (626) 915-1709 (fax); [mariesirney@agu.edu](mailto:mariesirney@agu.edu) - Admission requirements, application status, advanced standing/transfer credit, enrollment counseling, VA (GI Bill) information.

**Student Services** – *Sherri Angster*, Ext. 1002; (626) 332-8149 (fax); [studentservices@agu.edu](mailto:studentservices@agu.edu) – Exam requests, grade notifications, grade disputes, transcript requests, proctor changes.

**Student Support** – *Rachel Ruiz*, Ext. 1005; (626) 332-8149 (fax); [rachelruiz@agu.edu](mailto:rachelruiz@agu.edu) – Leave of absence and extension requests.

**Academic Affairs** – *Paul McDonald*, Ext. 1006; (626) 915-1709 (fax); [paulmcdonald@agu.edu](mailto:paulmcdonald@agu.edu) – Instructor issues, program changes, curriculum questions.

## **FACULTY**

The faculty of the American Graduate University is listed below. Please contact AGU at [info@agu.edu](mailto:info@agu.edu) for current e-mail addresses:

Clark Adams – B.S.L., J.D., Former Assistant Director, International Division, General Accounting Office

Laurie Brown – B.S., M.P.M., Manager, System Engineering and Analysis, Teledyne Brown Engineering

Toby R. Gouker – B.S., M.B.A., Ph.D., Vice President, Education and Professional Development, Regulatory Affairs Professional Society

Michael J. Kingston – B.S., M.P.M., Logistics Officer, U.S. Navy

Paul R. McDonald – M.B.A., President, American Graduate University

Gene Murabito – M.B.A., Business Solutions, Inc.

Christi O’Leary – B.S., M.A.M., Strategic Business Broker, Eglin Air Force Base

Nicolas A. Pologeorgis – B.A., M.B.A., Ph.D., Principal, Center for Assessment & Accreditation

Bill Ryan – B.S., M.B.A., President, Ryan Marketing Group

Marie J. Sirney – B.A., M.L.S., Executive Vice President, American Graduate University

James F. Southerland – B.S., M.S., Principal, Contracts Advisory Service

Earl Sprague – M.S., M.B.A., Business Consultant

Andrew Truong – M.B.A., Assistant Graduate Director, California State Polytechnic University

Keith Wade – B.A., M.B.A., Ph.D. (pending), Consultant

John Wyatt – J.D., Professor, California State Polytechnic University

## **ADVANCED STANDING (TRANSFER CREDIT)**

Students may receive advanced standing (transfer credit) for courses taken at other recognized public, private, or Government educational institutions. No advanced standing will be given for courses taken in an undergraduate program. Approval for specific courses will be established individually on the basis of breadth, scope, organization, and quality of work offered in relationship to the courses required by the American Graduate University. Under California law, no more than six semester units (two courses) will be accepted for advanced standing into the degree and certificate programs. Requests for advanced standing should be sent to the AGU

Admissions Department by mail, fax (626-915-1709), or e-mail ([mariesirney@agu.edu](mailto:mariesirney@agu.edu)). They should be accompanied by objective evidence of the quality of the courses offered, including (1) name of sponsoring institution, (2) text material used, (3) course outline, (4) proof that the student has taken the course, and (5) grade attained. No credit can be given for seminars or conferences.

### **COURSE CHALLENGE (TESTING OUT)**

Students enrolled in one of the degree programs who have received advanced standing (transfer credit) for two courses, but have taken additional similar courses in a graduate or government institution may challenge (test out) up to two courses. Certificate students may not challenge courses. Students must receive prior approval from the Admissions Department before requesting a challenge exam.

In order to receive credit through a challenge, students must pass the final examination for the course with a score of 80% or above. The completed examination must be returned within 45 days.

There is a \$250 fee charged per challenge. Students who do not receive a score of 80% or above on the challenge examination will be required to register for the course. The \$250 challenge fee will be deducted from the \$825 tuition.

### **STUDENT PRIVACY POLICY (FERPA)**

Under the provisions of the federal law known as the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), eligible students, or where applicable, the parents of the students, are afforded certain rights pertaining to University records and personally identifiable information on file with American Graduate University. An eligible student is defined as any person who is currently enrolled or has been enrolled in American Graduate University's programs. It is the policy of American Graduate University to treat all student information, both personal and academic, as strictly confidential. Student information will only be released after appropriate written permission has been obtained.

### **COMPLAINTS POLICY**

If you have any complaints concerning American Graduate University programs you should contact: Paul McDonald, President, American Graduate University, 733 N. Dodsworth Ave., Covina, CA 91724, 626-966-4576, Ext. 1006, [paulmcdonald@agu.edu](mailto:paulmcdonald@agu.edu).

### **STUDENT PORTAL**

Your personal information, unofficial transcript and online library services are available to you by logging into the Student Portal in the Student Center. You must enter your student number and password. This information was given to you in your acceptance package. Please contact student services at [studentservices@agu.edu](mailto:studentservices@agu.edu) if you need help with this information.

If your personal information (address, phone number, e-mail address, etc.) should change, please log into the student portal and make the corrections.

Your current grades can be accessed from the student portal. You may also print out your grades in an unofficial transcript format. Information on requesting an official transcript can be found on page 25.

## ON-LINE LIBRARY SERVICES

American Graduate University is a member of the Library and Information Resources Network (LIRN). As mentioned previously, this on-line library service is accessible through the AGU Student Portal in the website's Student Center.

LIRN provides a core library collection with access to:

- **Gale/InfoTrac:** Business and Company Resource Center with PROMT and Newsletters, Computer Database, Custom Newspapers (contains full text articles from 128 newspapers), Expanded Academic ASAP, Gale Virtual Reference Library, General Business File ASAP, Health and Wellness Resource Center and Alternative Health Module, Health Reference Center Academic, InfoTrac LegalTrac, InfoTrac OneFile, Literature Resource Center, Newsletters ASAP, Opposing Viewpoints Resource Center, and the Student Resource Center-Gold.
- **ProQuest:** ABI/INFORM Dateline, ABI/INFORM Global, ABI/INFORM Trade & Industry, National Newspaper Abstracts, ProQuest Psychology Journals, and ProQuest Research Library (with 15 subject modules).
- **eLibrary:** Selected periodicals, reference books, maps, pictures, newspapers from around the world, and transcripts of news and public affairs broadcasts.
- **Bowker:** Books in Print

Access is 24 hours per day, 7 days a week.

# FINANCIAL INFORMATION

## METHODS OF PAYMENT

Course tuition is due and payable at the time of registration.

- AGU accepts online payments from MasterCard, Visa, American Express, Discover, or Government Credit Card.
- AGU accepts a DD 1556 or SF 182 tuition assistance form.
- AGU accepts checks and money orders\* payable to “American Graduate University,” and purchase orders.
- AGU also accepts various types of military tuition assistance.

\*Please note: Payment is not complete – and the request is not processed – until checks and/or Government Tuition Assistance or Tuition Reimbursement documentation has been received and processed by American Graduate University.

## TUITION ASSISTANCE

Tuition costs associated with graduate degrees and master’s certificates are covered in whole or in part by virtually all government agencies and many commercial organizations.

**Note:** You should confirm approval and financial assistance before registering for any courses.

**Federal Government Tuition Reimbursement** – As a full-time employee of the federal government, you in all likelihood are eligible for reimbursement of tuition and book costs associated with your AGU studies. A number of agencies support job-related studies with up to 100% tuition reimbursement and may also cover the cost of all required textbooks.

**Department of Defense (DOD) Training Funds** – If you are serving in the military or the Federal Civil Service, you should contact your Education Services Officer (ESO) or Civilian Training Representative to find out how to obtain funds before registering for University classes. These funds are not administered by DANTES and are typically reserved for courses that apply directly to your job. You may pay tuition with command or agency training funds by submitting a Standard Form 182 (or other applicable form).

**Military Tuition Assistance** – The Department of Defense has standardized its Tuition Assistance (TA) program across military services and reimburses active-duty military members a percentage of tuition costs for all courses\* offered by nationally or regionally accredited institutions. If you plan to use Military TA for tuition payment, please visit your service’s ESO or Education Center.

\*Be aware that DOD regulations allow you to use Military TA to pay for one degree per level. You can’t use TA for a second master’s degree unless special permission has been granted by the military.

American Graduate University qualifies for the Department of Defense (DOD) Tuition Assistance (TA) program and is listed in the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) Catalog of Nationally Accredited Distance Learning Programs. This catalog can be found in each base/installation education office. An Education Services Officer (ESO) should be able to advise you on program eligibility. If you encounter any obstacles with regard to military tuition assistance, please contact the AGU Registrar.

### **Restrictions**

- Military Tuition Assistance does not cover AGU application fees.
- The ceiling for DOD TA is \$250 per credit hour and \$4,500 per fiscal year (Oct. 1 - Sept. 30). You are eligible to register and complete up to five AGU courses per fiscal year before exceeding the present limits. Please note: The total amount of student TA cannot exceed the total amount of tuition.
- You must register online and send in the appropriate forms in order to complete payment for the course. Submission of a DANTES 1562/31 (Distance Learning Course Enrollment Form) or other Tuition Assistance form does not constitute registration for a course.
- If you are using TA, you are responsible for completing payment for your courses by having all approved, completed TA forms submitted prior to the start of the class.
- Completed and approved TA forms should arrive with the registration.

**Reserve Component** – Reserve component members are also eligible for TA under this policy; however, each service component has established specific guidelines, limits, and policies for its members that may not mirror those for the active components. Before registering for any courses, reserve members should check with their local Education Services Officer (ESO) for specific information and full understanding of the limits of their TA coverage.

Reserve members are also encouraged to seek any employer tuition assistance programs that may lower their total out-of-pocket costs.

**Corporate Tuition Reimbursement** – Many corporations and companies offer educational benefits to their employees. AGU students should check with their Human Resources representative for specific details of any organization’s education programs. AGU will provide any necessary information regarding tuition, fees, accreditation, course content, or other information required by an organization.

### **TUITION ASSISTANCE RESTRICTIONS**

The DOD, other federal agencies, and most corporations extend tuition assistance with the expectation and understanding that students will successfully complete their course(s).

Students who fail to complete their course(s) may be expected to reimburse their employer for any amounts of assistance received. Military students will have the amount of tuition not refunded by the school deducted from their pay unless waived due to operational reasons. Military students must also achieve a grade of “B” or better in their graduate courses to prevent having to reimburse the government for the assistance received.

All students should check with their Education Services Officer (ESO) or HR Training Director for details pertaining to any restrictions before registering for any courses or receiving any assistance.

## VETERANS ADMINISTRATION (VA) BENEFITS

If you are eligible for VA benefits, you must first apply for admission and be accepted as an AGU student prior to setting up your VA benefits.

### TUITION PAYMENT FOR VA USERS

Students who are using the Montgomery GI Bill will be required to pay the course tuition upon registration. Students using the Post 9/11 GI Bill are not required to pay tuition upon registration since the VA pays their tuition directly to AGU.

**Please note:** Students who are eligible to combine DOD tuition assistance with VA benefits must notify their VA office.

### STARTING VA BENEFITS

1. Contact the VA office online at <http://www.GIBill.va.gov> (or toll-free at 1-888-442-4551) to see if you qualify for VA benefits and to request any necessary form(s). Please note: Forms should also be available at all DVA offices, most active duty military stations, and American Embassies in other countries.
2. Use the Veterans ON-line Application (VONAPP) site ([www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov)) to complete an application for benefits. Complete Form 22-5490 if you're applying for benefits based on being a dependent or spouse of a service connected injured or deceased veteran. Use Form 22-1990 for all other programs. You may also complete Form 22-5495 or 22-1995 if you've been receiving benefits and need to notify VA that you're changing schools or programs of study.
3. The VA will send you a copy of your certificate of eligibility. Fax (626-915-1709) or e-mail ([mariesirney@agu.edu](mailto:mariesirney@agu.edu)) a copy of the certificate to AGU.
4. Register for a course. Once you register, the AGU Administration Office will send an enrollment certification to the VA office to start the benefits.

**Please note:** Discharged students must also send a copy of their DD214.

### VA BENEFIT LEVEL

The following table equates semester hours with VA benefit levels:

6 semester hours (2 courses)	Full-Time
3 semester hours (1 course)	Half-Time

## REFUND POLICY

The student has a right to a full refund of all charges (including registration fee) upon request up to ten working days after receipt of the course materials. After that time, the student has the right to a refund less the amount of \$200.00 for the registration fee.

After the official drop period of ten working days, the student may withdraw from a course after instruction has started and receive a pro rata refund for the unused portion of the tuition and other refundable charges if the student has completed 60% or less of the instruction. For example, if the student completes only 30 hours of a 90-hour course and paid \$825.00 tuition; after subtracting the \$200.00 registration fee, the student would receive a potential refund of \$416.66.

$$\begin{array}{r} \$625.00 \\ \text{(Tuition minus} \\ \text{Reg. Fee)} \end{array} \times \frac{\begin{array}{l} 60 \text{ clock hours of instruction} \\ \text{paid for but not received} \\ 90 \text{ clock hours of instruction} \\ \text{for which student has paid} \end{array}}{90 \text{ clock hours of instruction}} = \$416.66$$

NOTE: The State of California requires that the refund policy be expressed in clock hours of instruction, as above. An example of the policy expressed for distance education lessons completed would be: if the student completes only 10 lessons of a 30-lesson course and paid \$825.00 tuition; after subtracting the \$200.00 registration fee, the student would receive a potential refund of \$416.66.

$$\begin{array}{r} \$625.00 \\ \text{(Tuition minus} \\ \text{Reg. Fee)} \end{array} \times \frac{\begin{array}{l} 20 \text{ lessons} \\ \text{paid for but not completed} \\ 30 \text{ lessons} \\ \text{for which student has paid} \end{array}}{30 \text{ lessons}} = \$416.66$$

If the school cancels or discontinues a course or educational program, the school will make a full refund of all charges. Refunds will be paid within 30 days of cancellation or withdrawal.

Students may receive a refund up to 7 ½ months after their course start date. After this date, no refunds will be issued.

# REGISTERING FOR A COURSE

## COURSE SCHEDULES

Since AGU has continuous enrollment, students may register for a course at any time.

## COURSE REGISTRATION

Students are required to register for courses using the on-line registration form using the following steps:

- Access the AGU website at [www.agu.edu](http://www.agu.edu)
- Click on “for Current Students” in the top right hand corner
- Click on “Register for Courses” in the left hand column
- Select the course title from the “Course” drop down box at the center of the page
- Click on “Register” to the right of the course title
- Fill out the “Distance Course Registration” form and then click on the “Submit” link at the bottom of the page
- Fax (626-915-1709), e-mail ([info@agu.edu](mailto:info@agu.edu)), or mail your signed tuition assistance form to AGU, Attn: Debbie McDonald, Registrar
- If you are paying by check, please make the check payable to American Graduate University, 733 N. Dodsworth Ave., Covina, CA 91724

If you have any questions, please contact the Registrar, Debbie McDonald, at (877) 351-9060, Ext. 1001 or by email to [debbiemcdonald@agu.edu](mailto:debbiemcdonald@agu.edu).

## COURSE PAYMENT

AGU requires receipt of payment (by check or credit card), tuition assistance form, or company purchase order prior to registration.

AGU understands that Government funding issues may necessitate that a student register for more than one course at a time. If a student registers for more than one course and is not using VA benefits, they should indicate a new start date on the Student Enrollment Agreement. This date must be no later than the five-month completion date for the previous course.

## SHIPMENT OF COURSE MATERIALS

Shipments within the United States are sent by UPS Ground service. Military and government employees stationed overseas are sent materials by Priority Mail. Costs of these shipments are covered in the tuition fee. Other shipments outside the U.S. are not included in the tuition fee. Students requiring shipment to overseas countries should contact the Registrar ([debbiemcdonald@agu.edu](mailto:debbiemcdonald@agu.edu)) for a shipping quote prior to registration.

# TAKING YOUR COURSE

## INITIAL ACTIONS

Once you have registered for a course three things will occur. Your instructor will be notified of your registration; you will be sent your student identification number and password for the Coursewebs online testing site; and your course materials will be sent to you.

## TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

In order to fulfill the requirements of the AGU course curriculum all students are expected to have, or have access to:

- A personal computer
- An email account
- A word-processor software program such as *Microsoft Word*, *Appleworks*, *iWork Pages*, or *Open Office Writer*.
- A web-browser (Internet Explorer or Firefox)

## COURSE INSTRUCTOR

You have an assigned instructor. Your instructor will contact you by email shortly after your registration with his or her email address. You may contact the instructor for assistance at any time during the course. You should also copy the AGU Student Services Department ([studentservices@agu.edu](mailto:studentservices@agu.edu)) on all correspondence with instructors so that they may monitor their responses.

## COURSEWEBS ONLINE TESTING SITE

You will receive an email message containing your User ID (student number) and initial password in order for you to log onto the Coursewebs Online System. The subject examinations in each course are provided in print to you in your course package, but are also available through the "Exam Center" in AGU's Coursewebs online examination system at <http://agu.coursewebs.com>. More detailed instructions will be included under the section entitled "Using the Online Examination System" on page 18.

## COURSE PACKAGE

Within 24 hours of your registration your materials will be shipped to you. The package will contain the following items:

- Course Textbook
- Lesson Study Guide
- Packing Slip
- Welcome Letter
- Student Enrollment Agreement (two copies)

Please inspect your course materials to ensure that you have received everything and that they are in good condition.

## **STUDENT ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT**

The student enrollment agreement is a contract that defines essential terms and conditions related to your enrollment; such as refund information, start and completion dates, academic integrity, etc. **Remember, you have five months to complete each course.** You will receive two copies of the agreement. After reviewing the agreement please sign one copy and return in the envelope provided. One signed copy of the enrollment agreement **must** be returned to the University or no final grade will be issued.

## **TERM OF ENROLLMENT AGREEMENT**

The enrollment agreement will expire seven and a half (7 ½) months after the course start date listed on the student's course enrollment agreement. After this date, no refunds will be issued.

## **MULTIPLE COURSE REGISTRATIONS**

If a student registers for more than one course on the same day the student must indicate start dates for each course in Section H, "Course Completion Requirement," on the copy of the Student Enrollment Agreement being returned to AGU. The five month completion period will start from those dates. On the enrollment agreement that pertains to the additional course(s) you will cross out the start date and indicate the date you will be beginning the course. This date may not be more than five months after the original start date. You will also cross out the listed completion date and mark it with a date five months from your revised start date. Sign, date and return this enrollment agreement to AGU in the envelope provided.

## **STUDY REFERENCE GUIDE**

Each Course includes a binder called the Study Reference Guide (SRG), which directs you through the course. The SRG begins with the Table of Contents listing all the Lessons and another sheet of Course Objectives that set out what you will have learned once you complete the Course.

Lesson modules constitute the major portion of the SRG. Each lesson module will contain some or all of the following:

1. Lesson Topic
2. Lesson Objectives
3. Lesson Assignment
4. Lesson Review Exercises
5. Subject Examination
6. Answers to the Lesson Review Exercises

## **APPLICATION LESSONS**

Most of the courses contain Application Lessons. These lessons include cases, exercises, problems and essays that allow the student to apply the knowledge learned in a previous set of lessons. The student's work in the Application Lesson is reviewed and graded by the course instructor. At times, the student will be requested to show his or her work, use special programs like spreadsheets, or access a CD or Internet materials that may come with the textbook for the Course.

# BEGINNING YOUR COURSEWORK

## DEVELOPMENT OF STUDY SKILLS

There are many ways to study. Without direction, every student develops a method of his or her own which is more or less successful. If it is more successful than less, the student will continue to use and to improve it as he or she goes. After a period of trial and error the student produces a method that works most of the time. We want to eliminate that trial and error period for you, and give you a student method that will work if you follow it.

Over the years AGU has found the Five-Step Study Method to be very successful for distance learning. If you follow this method you will learn the material by taking small steps that will move you from the simple to the difficult. You will make steady progress in developing knowledge of the material. Each correct step you take will be reinforced several times, and each judgment you make about the subject matter will be confirmed or corrected by the approved answers to the Lesson Review Exercises, the Subject Examination and the final Course Examination.

## THE FIVE-STEP STUDY METHOD

In your course package you received the Study Reference Guide (SRG). This guide directs you through the course. To begin your coursework turn to the first lesson in the SRG and begin your steps.

*Preview* - The first page of each lesson includes the Lesson Topic, Lesson Objectives, and Lesson Assignment. **Read this page carefully.** The Lesson Objectives will indicate the information you will be expected to know upon completion of the Lesson. The Lesson Assignment will take you to the exact chapter(s) to read in order to complete the lesson. Turn to the assigned chapter and review the individual headings. Turn back to the beginning of the chapter and read it in its entirety.

*Question* - This is the second reading of the assigned chapter. Pen or pencil in hand you ask yourself as you read "What are the objectives of the lesson?" and "What are the important points?" Underline these points in the text materials, and then look at the second part of the Lesson, the Lesson Review Exercises (LREs), *but not the answers.*

*Read* - This is the third and most detailed reading. Now you have the Lesson Review Exercises in mind as you read, searching for the right answer for each LRE item.

*State* - In combination with the "read step" you state in your own words each Lesson Review Exercise answer, writing it in the blank space provided after each LRE Item.

*Check* - The "check" step is comparing your answer against the approved answer AGU has provided. If you did not interpret a question or the text correctly and have come up with a different answer, go back to the text and reread. If you still believe that your answer is the best response to the LRE contact your instructor using the email address he/she provided in the instructor welcome message.

**After completing all these steps you're ready to log onto the Courswebs Online Testing System and take the Subject Examination or Application Lesson.**

# ANSWERING THE SUBJECT EXAMINATIONS AND APPLICATION LESSONS

Now you are ready to take larger steps as you answer the Subject Examinations provided for each Lesson or complete an Application Lesson assignment. The Subject Examination items cover more content than the Lesson Review Exercises. Subject Examinations encompass the entire lesson and the relationships of the subject matter in it. Subject examinations are multiple choice and true-false objective-type items, and application lessons that include essays, exercises, problems or case analyses like those you found in the Lesson Review Exercises. Application lessons are graded by your instructor via the Coursewebs system. **All course assignments must be completed and turned in for grading. Failure to complete a subject examination or application lesson will result in an Incomplete grade in the course.**

## TIPS FOR COMPLETING AN APPLICATION LESSON

Application lessons provide a way for you to demonstrate what you've learned to your instructor. Ordinarily there are four to five application lessons in each course. They follow three or four objective (multiple choice/true-false) subject examinations. Unlike the objective examinations, application lessons aren't checking to see if you have learned certain pieces of information. Instead they give you an opportunity to show how you can apply what you've learned in the previous lessons. *It is very important that you submit your application lessons in the assigned sequence.*

There are certain steps you should take when you are preparing your response to an application lesson:

1. Read the directions from the instructor. Note whether there is a required word count.
2. Read the questions carefully.
3. Underline what you are being asked to do, paying particular attention to words such as: explain, discuss, compare, list, etc.
4. If the lesson requires essays or answers to case problems write at least three paragraphs including an introduction, body and conclusion.
5. In the introductory paragraph turn the question or statement into a thesis sentence adding your opinion to the statement.
6. Include at least three supporting statements in the body of your response. Back up your opinions with the facts and examples.
7. Keep your sentences short and watch for run-on sentences.
8. Break for a new idea with a new paragraph. Keep paragraphs short – no more than 4 to 5 sentences.

9. Be sure to proof your work. Don't assume that spell check will catch everything.
10. State your conclusions in your final paragraph. Sum up your points and provide a final perspective.
11. Before you send in your response to the application lesson be sure to include your name, course number and lesson number. Read what you have written out loud. Fix any awkward or unclear sentences before you post it to Coursewebs.

## USING THE ONLINE EXAMINATION SYSTEM

The Subject Examinations in each course are available in print in your individual Study Reference Guide and through the "Exam Center" in AGU's Coursewebs online examination system at <http://agu.coursewebs.com>.

To take an examination online, go to <http://agu.coursewebs.com>; log into the system with your user name and password, which you have received via email. Once logged in, choose the desired course. When the course comes up, click "Exam Center" on the left-hand menu. This will bring up all the lesson exams for the Course. Choose the appropriate lesson exam and take and submit the exam online. Detailed instructions for using the site are available below and in the "Exam Center."

### Taking An Exam

For multiple choice and true-false questions, click on the bubble that corresponds to your selected answer. For short-answer questions, type or cut-and-paste your answer into the box provided. Application lessons, which include essays, case problems, and/or exercises are also submitted using the online system by uploading a file. To upload a file, click on the blue link (click here to upload file) at the end of the question. Select a file to upload by clicking on the "browse" button, and select the file containing your work. Then click on the "Upload" button. On rare occasions you may need to fax or email your work directly to the Student Services Department. The Student Services Department then forwards the work directly to your instructor.

You advance through the exam by clicking the **Next** button at the bottom of the screen to go forward, and by clicking the **Previous** button to go backward. Each time you click on the **Next** button, the system will automatically save your answers.

### Printing An Exam

Every page on the exam has a **Print/View** button. If you click on this button, the system will bring up another window. At the bottom of this window there is a **Print** button. **Print** will print out the entire exam (showing any answers that you have already given). You can use the Print feature to review the exam before you submit it for grading.

### Submitting An Exam For Grading

The final screen of an exam will have several buttons: **\*\*SUBMIT EXAM\*\*** AND **Save Without Submit**. If you want to save your answers but not submit the exam, click on the **Save Without Submit** button. You can then go back in at any time to submit the exam.

When you are ready to submit the exam for grading, click on **\*\*SUBMIT EXAM\*\***. Once you submit an exam for grading, you CANNOT go back and make any changes.

When you click **\*\*SUBMIT EXAM\*\***, the system will ask if you are sure. Click "OK." If you are not ready to submit the exam for grading, click "Cancel." Use the **Previous** and **Next** buttons to change or review answers, or use the **Log Off** link on the left panel to exit the system, so you can return to work on the exam at a later time.

### **Returning To An Un-submitted Exam**

Until you click **\*\*SUBMIT EXAM\*\*** and "OK" at the last screen, you can log off and come back to continue the exam or change your answers as many times as you like. To return to an exam after logging out, log back into the course, click on **Exam Center** and click on the link that says **Continue with Exam**.

### **Receiving Your Grade And Reviewing Your Exam**

If the exam does not contain any essay questions, short answer questions, or exercises you will receive your grade on the screen immediately (as well as via email). If the exam has essay questions, short answer questions, or exercises you will see a message telling you that the exam grading needs to be completed by the instructor (you will also get an email with this message).

You can review a submitted exam in two ways:

1. Immediately after submitting the exam, the screen with your grade will have a **Review this exam** button. Click this button to review the exam.
2. If you want to review your exam later, log back into the course, click on **Exam Center**, and click on the exam you want to review.

When you review an exam, all correct questions will have a green arrow and all incorrect questions will have a red X. Any question with a red exclamation point requires grading by your instructor. The Feedback section for each multiple choice or true-false question will show the page number where the material associated with the question can be found.

### **Examination Retakes**

A score of at least 80% is required in order to pass any examination. Students are limited to examination retakes totaling 20% of the lessons for each course. For instance, if a course requires the completion of 25 lessons then the student would be permitted to retake 5 of the lesson examinations. If a student receives a score below 80% and has not exceeded the retake quota for that course an e-mail will be sent notifying the student that the exam is available for review (without the answers). If the student wishes to retake the exam they contact Student Services ([studentservices@agu.edu](mailto:studentservices@agu.edu)) to request that the lesson exam be reset. When a student retakes an exam, he or she only needs to answer those questions that were wrong.

The score of a retake examination is capped at 80%. Even if a student gets all the answers correct, they will still be awarded a maximum score of 80% on the retake exam. If the student receives a score below 80% on the retake he or she will be awarded that actual score on the examination. If a student has reached the quota of retakes for the course, they will not be permitted to retake any further lesson examinations and will receive the grade earned on the initial submission of an examination.

If a student mistakenly hits the submit button before finishing the exam or there is a technical problem with their exam they should contact Student Services. Student Services will rectify the problem and reset the examination with no penalties or caps.

### **Comments And Questions**

If you have any comments, suggestions, or problems to report when using the system, please contact AGU Student Services by phone at (626) 966-4576, ext. 1002 or 1005, or via email at [studentservices@agu.edu](mailto:studentservices@agu.edu).

### **CONFIRMING AND CORRECTING**

You have now taken all the study steps for your lesson, answered the Lesson Review Exercises (LREs) correctly, and taken and submitted your Subject Examination or Application Lesson assignment. Move on to the next lesson and start working on it, using the Five-Step Study Method. Each lesson is a self-contained unit. It is difficult to establish good study habits. Once they are established they should be maintained.

AGU's online exam system instantaneously grades all objective exam questions, and any other questions or assignments that require grading by the instructor will be completed within AGU's established 48-hour turnaround time.

Once you have received your email stating your grade and any questions that you answered incorrectly, be sure to:

1. Look up each item you missed.
2. Reread the text material connected with that particular item.

Reviewing your graded exam is a major part of the learning process. First, you can see how well you have learned the lesson. Second, you should use the information in the email to review the right answer on the exam so that with some study you would not miss it again. However, if after rereading the text material on an item you have missed, you still think your choice was the best one, contact your instructor and copy the University by email ([studentservices@agu.edu](mailto:studentservices@agu.edu)) or use the "Student Assistance Form" on the AGU website (click on "Student Center" and then on "Student Assistance). Identify yourself and your inquiry fully, giving the course, the specific question, and list the volume and the specific text reference by page and line on the page supporting your answer.

Explaining a problem via email requires that you provide a succinct statement of the problem or question. You should summarize the steps you have taken toward solving the problem on your own. Many times this effort alone will lead you to find the answer on your own.

Your instructor will respond to your email within two business days.

Sometimes email communication is not sufficient to solve your problem. In those instances the instructor will make an appointment for a telephone conference. The instructor will make arrangements with you via email.

Feedback is a vital step in the learning process. It not only *corrects*, showing where you were wrong and will need to do some more reinforcing, but also confirms, showing you where you were right. In the feedback process, knowing where you are right is of course as important as knowing where you are wrong.

# COMPLETING YOUR COURSE

## THE FINAL COURSE EXAMINATION

You must request the final examination after completion of the last lesson of the course. The exam will not automatically be sent to you and is not available on the Coursewebs Online System. Use the exam request form in your acceptance package or access the exam request form from the "Forms" link in the Student Center of the AGU website. Fax (626-332-8149) or email ([studentservices@agu.edu](mailto:studentservices@agu.edu)) the form to the Student Services department. Certain final examinations are proctored. All degree students are notified in their acceptance package which final exams must be proctored.

## PROCTORED FINAL EXAMINATIONS

Our accrediting association, the Distance Education and Training Council, requires that a student's achievement be assessed by proctored final examinations appropriately spaced throughout the program. While we recognize that our students are motivated, ethical individuals we are still obligated to comply with this requirement. General and certificate students are not required to have any final exams proctored.

If you are a degree student you received a proctor letter in your acceptance package which indicated which of your course final exams must be proctored. If you have mislaid the sheet please contact student services for another list.

One week prior to taking your first proctored exam, please submit the Proctored Final Exam Request form accessible from the "Forms" link in the Student Center of the AGU website. The student is responsible for arranging a test date with their chosen proctor. Proctors cannot be relatives, friends, subordinates, or other AGU students. They can be a supervisor, co-worker, librarian, or members of your human resources or education and training offices.

All examinations, including proctored examinations, are open book. You may bring to the test site your textbook, notes and lesson plans.

You will be required to provide proof of identification with two pieces of personal identification; at least one piece should have a recent picture. If the student cannot provide appropriate identification, the test must be notarized.

Student services will email your exam directly to the proctor along with an instruction sheet. The proctor will fax the test answer sheet and signed proctor form back to student services.

## Proctor Guidelines

1. **Proctors cannot be relatives, friends, subordinates, or other AGU students.** Proctors may be superiors, co-workers, representatives of the human resources or training offices, clergy, or librarians.
2. Proctors shall arrange a suitable, secure, well-lighted area to administer the proctored exam.

3. **Exams are not allowed to be copied or taken home by anyone.** No one other than the proctor and the student shall view the proctored exam and the two are only allowed to see it at the time of testing.
4. Students must complete the exam and the proctor must return the packet within thirty (30) days from the date the proctor receives the exam, unless arrangements have been made with American Graduate University.
5. The time limit for the exam is four hours.
6. **These examinations are to be given open book.** Students may bring to the test site their textbooks, notes, and lesson plans for use in completing the examination.
7. Students must provide proof of identification with two pieces of personal identification; at least one piece should have a recent picture. If the student cannot provide appropriate identification, this document must be notarized.
8. The proctor will send the student's examination answer sheet with a signed proctor form to the Student Services Department by fax (626-332-8149) or email ([studentservices@agu.edu](mailto:studentservices@agu.edu)).

**Students will be suspended or terminated if any of the following violations of trust occur:**

1. If the student obtains or attempts to obtain the proctored examination at any other time than that scheduled with the proctor.
2. If the student is assisted knowingly by any other person in obtaining or attempting to obtain the proctored examination.
3. If the student is assisted during the examination in answering questions by using any unauthorized source, i.e., books, co-workers, etc.
4. If the student is allowed to take the final exam out of the testing area. Exams are absolutely not allowed to be taken home.

If any of the violations mentioned above should occur, the examination process must be immediately terminated and the examination, finished or not, must be returned to American Graduate University.

## **OTHER FINAL EXAMINATIONS**

If your final exam is not required to be proctored, submit the Final Examination Request Form from the "Forms" link in the Student Center on the AGU website by emailing or faxing your request to Student Services. Student Services will then email or fax a copy of the exam directly to you.

## **HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE FINAL EXAMINATION**

Students taking examinations are divided into two kinds: those who are comfortable in a testing situation and those who are miserable. Why is it sometimes the most conscientious scholar will "freeze" when he or she clutches the pencil and starts to "be examined"? Psychologists tell us that our thing about examinations is fear, and our fear is born of lack of confidence in ourselves and the way we perform under mental pressure. The following are some pointers for taking examinations more comfortably.

First, *Be Prepared*. Follow the Five-Step Study Method and make an overall review of all course material prior to taking the Final Examination. Carefully review the Lesson Review Exercises and the Subject Examinations. Don't take a chance on being prepared; give yourself every break and get ready for the examination as thoroughly as you possibly can.

The second point is *Slow Down and Read*. You can't answer an examination question correctly until you know what it says and what is being asked for. Look for key words in the item such as *not, except, first, only, all, every*, and the like.

The third point is *Don't Stall*. You have ample time if you are well prepared; however, you can lose a lot of this time by stalling on individual items. Answer those items you are sure of first. If an item appears to be difficult, go on to the next one. Go straight through the entire examination answering those items in which you are reasonably sure of the answer. Then, in the remaining time you can go back to the tough ones. Suppose your examination has 100 items and you stall on number 50. If you stop there and never finish you can guess what your score will be. Remember that your right answers count, not your wrong ones, so get as many right answers as you can. Do not make "wild guesses" but mark every item.

The fourth point is *Check and Recheck*. You have an answer sheet to mark. The grader scoring the sheet is going to respond to your actual marks or to blank answers, not to what you meant to make. If choice B is correct, mark B, not any other. Take a few extra minutes to check what you have marked on the exam form; this will pay heavy dividends. More simple transferal errors are made than any other kind.

## **Essay Questions**

Before you start answering an essay question or case problem, make a short outline of your answer. The outline may be a list of the various points involved in the question or a list of subordinate questions. Don't make a detailed outline. Just jot down single words or short phrases to serve as a guide. Then number the words or phrases in a logical order and start to write. Don't use big words where a simple one will do. Imagine you are explaining the question to a friend. Don't go into too much detail. If you put down the main points in a logical fashion the instructor will give you credit for knowing the detail. When you finish, read your answer over. Don't hesitate to revise your answer.

Be sure to note whether there is a required word count. Do not submit your answer in a list or bullet format. An essay requires that you submit at least three paragraphs (please see "Tips for Completing an Application Lesson" on page 17).

## **SUBMISSION OF THE NON-PROCTORED FINAL EXAMINATION**

Final examinations are submitted using the generic online exam form available from the Student Center on the AGU website at [www.agu.edu/student\\_center/online\\_exam.html](http://www.agu.edu/student_center/online_exam.html) or by faxing the exam answer sheet to Student Services at 626-332-8149.

## **EXAMINATION RESULTS**

The Student Services Department will send you a notification by email of your final examination grade as well as your final overall course grade. The score given on the final examination is given in percentage form. Grades must be 80% or better to be satisfactory. If the grade is 80% or above, the correct answers to questions will be indicated so you will be able to see where you are in error. If the score is below 80%, the correct answers are not given. You will

be asked to retake the final examination, submitting only the answers to questions that were missed. The score of a retake examination is capped at 80%. Even if you get all the answers correct, you will only be awarded a maximum score of 80% on the retake examination. If your retake score is below 80% you will be awarded that score on your examination.

Once you have successfully completed the final examination, your activity with AGU on that particular course is ended. If a completion letter and/or certificate is required by your employer, a written request must be submitted via email ([studentservices@agu.edu](mailto:studentservices@agu.edu)), mail (AGU, 733 N. Dodworth Ave., Covina, CA 91724) or fax (626-332-8149). Completion letters are sent via email attachment. If an original hardcopy of a completion letter and/or certificate of completion is required, please specify in a written request which document is preferred. You can expect your request to be processed within five business days after receipt unless otherwise specified.

### **Examination Score Review**

If you think a given subject examination or final examination item has been scored incorrectly you may initiate a examination score review. Since examination scores more than six weeks old will **not** be reviewed you must act promptly.

The procedure for requesting an examination score review is:

1. Request Instructor Review. Submit a request to your instructor via email. State the subject (lesson) examination number or final examination on the subject line of the email message. Be sure to copy the Student Services Department ([studentservices@agu.edu](mailto:studentservices@agu.edu)) in your message. The body of your message should include:
  - The question number and text of the question
  - Your answer choice
  - An explanation of why you believe your answer choice was correct. Include page references in the text to support your answer.
2. Instructor Review. Your instructor will review your request and supporting evidence and will respond within two business days. If it is determined that your examination was scored incorrectly, your score will be revised accordingly.
3. Education Director Review: If you believe your instructor's decision is incorrect you may appeal the decision to the Education Director. Email a copy of your original request for review and the instructor's reply to [paulmcdonald@agu.edu](mailto:paulmcdonald@agu.edu). Additional information or new arguments will not be considered. The Education Director will communicate his decision to you, the instructor, and student services. His decision is final and additional appeals will not be considered.

### **COURSE EVALUATIONS**

Your grade notification will include a link to our end of course evaluation. We hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to evaluate your instructor, the course materials, and student services. It should only take you a few moments, but it will help us to maintain the high quality of our University.

## **PROGRAM TRANSFER**

After you are accepted into the degree or certificate program of your choice, you may decide you would like to pursue a different program. If you wish to change your program, you should fill out the “Degree/Certificate Program Transfer Form” accessible from the Student Center section of the website and submit it.

Transfer into another program may require the submission of additional information or requirements.

## **TRANSFERABILITY OF AGU CREDIT**

Since individual institutions determine their own credit transfer and degree acceptance policies, AGU cannot guarantee that other schools will accept its credits or degrees. Students who wish to transfer credits from AGU to another institution should contact the Registrar or Admissions Office at the university in question to determine whether credits from AGU will transfer to that institution.

## **TRANSCRIPTS**

You can review and print out your unofficial transcript through the Student Portal. To request an official transcript download the AGU Transcript Request Form from “Forms” link in the Student Center section on the AGU website. Transcripts will not be released without the student’s signature at the bottom of the request form. Transcripts will be withheld if there are any outstanding obligations to American Graduate University.

There is a transcript processing fee of \$5.00 per transcript. Payment must be included with the request. Requests with credit card payment may be faxed to 626-915-1709 (credit card number and expiration date must be provided with request). All other requests must be sent by mail with check or money order to American Graduate University, 733 N. Dodsworth Ave., Covina, CA 91724.

# GRADES

## COURSE GRADES

Your course grade is the average of your individual lesson examinations, projects, and final examinations. In most courses the lesson examinations (which may include a project) are worth 80%, while the final examination is worth 20%. AGU uses a “numerical” grading system. Students must receive a minimum grade of 80% for each course.

Grades	Quality Points
A (90-100%)	A = 4.0
B (80-89%)	B = 3.0
Below 80%	No credit

You may view your grades at any time by logging into the Student Portal from the Student Center on the website.

## INCOMPLETE GRADE

If you do not complete a course by the day after the end date stated on your Student Enrollment Agreement, and you have not requested an extension from the Student Services Department, a grade of incomplete (I) will be recorded on your transcript.

## RE-ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

A grade of incomplete automatically becomes an “F/I (Unresolved Incomplete)” if the course is not completed within one year of the original end date and you have not received approval for an extension or leave of absence. You then have the option of requesting re-enrollment. Re-enrollment fees will be determined based on the following factors: length of inactivity, possible new instructor, or new textbook edition with subsequent revision of course study guide. If you wish to re-enroll in a course, please contact the Student Support Specialist ([rachelruiz@agu.edu](mailto:rachelruiz@agu.edu)) in Student Services.

## ACADEMIC PROGRESS - NON-VA STUDENTS\*

You must show regular progress toward completion of your degree or certificate program. If you do not show any academic progress for one year and have not requested a leave of absence, it is considered to be evidence that you have withdrawn from the University. Your progress is monitored by the assigned faculty and Student Services Department.

If you fail to maintain adequate progress and wish to return to AGU, you may be required to re-apply.

## COURSE COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS

The time period to complete a course is five months from the date of receipt of course materials. The completion date is cited on your Student Enrollment Agreement. If you register for more than one course at a time you must indicate the start dates for each course. The start date for the second course may not be more than five months after the start date of the first course for which you registered on the same date.

---

\*Please see Appendix 3 for VA Academic Progress Requirements.

## EXTENSIONS

**First Extension** – Prior to the completion date, you may request in writing a 30-day extension of the deadline. There will be no charge for this extension.

**Second Extension** – You may request in writing a second extension from AGU. The decision to grant or deny a second extension will be made on a case-by-case basis. The student may be charged \$75.00 and/or required to purchase new course materials if they have been updated or changed since the course was originally acquired by the student.

After receiving an extension you must begin working on the course within one week and show continual progress or the extension will be revoked and you will be withdrawn from the course.

**If you are using tuition assistance, the approval of an extension is contingent upon approval of your education officer or payment official. Documentation of their approval must be forwarded to Student Services.**

Requests for extensions should be e-mailed ([rachelruiz@agu.edu](mailto:rachelruiz@agu.edu)) or faxed (626-332-8149) to the Student Services Specialist in Student Services.

## ADDITION/WITHDRAWAL

You may add an available course at any time. You may drop a course without penalty up to ten working days after receipt of course materials. Please see “Refund Policy” on page 12.

You may withdraw from the University at your discretion. To obtain information on withdrawing send an email to the Registrar ([debbiemcdonald@agu.edu](mailto:debbiemcdonald@agu.edu)) that includes your **full name, student number, and your reasons for wanting to withdraw.**

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST

American Graduate University realizes that even though our programs are designed to allow students to pursue their studies while they are working full time, managing their family responsibilities, traveling for business, or even being deployed overseas, there are instances when a student will need to suspend their studies in order to deal with unexpected hardships. If you wish to request a leave of absence you are required to submit a letter to the Student Services Department by fax (626-332-8149) or email ([rachelruiz@agu.edu](mailto:rachelruiz@agu.edu)). The letter should include your contact information and your reasons for requesting a leave of absence. The Executive Vice President makes the final decision about granting a leave of absence. Please allow five working days for a decision.

## PROBATION AND DISMISSAL

**Probation** – If you receive a failing grade (less than 80%) in two courses, you will be placed on academic probation. You may take only one additional course while clearing the failing grades on the two courses. If you do not clear the probation within one calendar year, you will be subject to dismissal from AGU.

**Dismissal and Appeals** – If you have been dismissed from AGU based on academic probation or failure to make academic progress you may appeal to the University for re-admission. All appeals for re-admission must be addressed to the President of the University, Paul McDonald ([paulmcdonald@agu.edu](mailto:paulmcdonald@agu.edu)). Appeals for re-admission should include the reasons for your lack of progress or failure and a proposed study plan.

# FINAL DEGREE PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

## COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

If you are enrolled in the Master of Acquisition Management, Master of Contract Management, Master of Supply Management, or Master of Project Management degree programs you will be required to either pass a comprehensive examination or complete a project upon completion of your required coursework.

The comprehensive examination is based on objective questions, short answer questions, exercises, and case problems which require you to demonstrate your ability to use the principles taught in the program. The comprehensive examination is sent home to you and you have 50 days to complete it. Since the examination is intensive it is advisable that you arrange a significant block of free time to devote to working on it.

You must pass the comprehensive examination with a score of 80% or above.

When you have completed all your required coursework you can request the comprehensive examination by submitting the Comprehensive Examination Request Form accessible from the "Forms" link in the Student Center of the AGU website.

## PROJECT

If you are enrolled in the Master of Business Administration degree program you must complete an approved project. Students in the other degree programs may elect to complete a project rather than take the comprehensive examination.

The project requires students to combine their academic with their life and business experience and successfully develop and implement a new effort in a real business situation. Since your topic must first be approved by the University administration it is advisable that you begin working on the project six months prior to completion of your coursework. Please see Appendices 4 and 5 for a copy of the **Project Guidelines**.

# ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

AGU expects you to act with honesty and integrity in completing your course and program work. Distance learning requires a high level of self-discipline with regard to academic integrity. All work submitted must represent the original work. **Students found to have cheated or committed plagiarism may be suspended or dismissed from the University.**

Upon acceptance into the program all students are sent a copy of the *AGU Code of Conduct*. This document is to be reviewed carefully, signed and sent back to the University. The Code includes the following requirements for AGU student conduct:

## *A Code of Conduct for the American Graduate University Student*

*As a student of the American Graduate University, I recognize that in the pursuit of my educational goals and aspirations I have certain responsibilities toward my fellow students, my institution, and myself. To fulfill these responsibilities, I pledge adherence to this Code of Conduct.*

*I will observe fully the standards, rules, policies, and guidelines established by AGU, the Accrediting Commission of the Distance Education and Training Council, the State Education Agency, and other appropriate organizations serving an oversight role for my institution.*

\*\*\*

*I will adhere to high ethical standards in the pursuit of my education, and to the best of my ability will:*

- 1. Conduct myself with professionalism, courtesy and respect for others in all of my dealings with the AGU staff, faculty, and other students.*
- 2. Observe the institutional policies and rules on submitting work, taking examinations, and conducting research.*
- 3. Never turn in work that is not my own, or present another person's ideas as my own.*
- 4. Never ask for, receive, or give unauthorized help on graded assignments and examinations.*
- 5. Never use outside books or papers that are unauthorized by my instructor's assignments or examinations.*
- 6. Never divulge the content of or answers to examinations to fellow students.*
- 7. Never improperly use, destroy, forge or alter AGU's documents, transcripts, or other records.*
- 8. Never divulge my online username or password.*
- 9. Always observe the recommended study schedule for my program of studies.*
- 10. Always report any violations of this Code of Conduct to the AGU Executive Vice President, and report any evidence of cheating, plagiarism or improper conduct on the part of any student of AGU when I have direct knowledge of these activities.*

# GRADUATION

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

In order to graduate you must complete the following requirements

### Master's Degrees (Except MBA)

- Completion of 36 semester credits within seven years
- Minimum overall GPA of 3.0 (B average)
- Successful completion of the comprehensive examination or project with a score of 80% or above
- Payment of all tuition and fees

### Master of Business Administration

- Completion of 48 semester credits within seven years
- Minimum overall GPA of 3.0 (B average)
- Successful completion of an approved project
- Payment of all tuition and fees

### Master's Certificate Programs

- Completion of 18 semester credits of courses within the certificate subject area
- Minimum overall GPA of 3.0 (B average)
- Payment of all tuition and fees

## ALUMNI

American Graduate University will be in contact with you periodically to enable you to update us concerning new jobs, achievements, honors and celebrations. In addition, you will receive an email copy of the AGU Master's Report.

Please be sure to keep us apprised of your contact information by writing to [info@agu.edu](mailto:info@agu.edu).

## DELTA EPSILON TAU INTERNATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

The American Graduate University Chapter of the Delta Epsilon Tau Honor Society (DET) was established to recognize the extraordinary high academic achievements and leadership of AGU outstanding students. DET is an international honor society, which recognizes individuals who have worked diligently to acquire new knowledge and skills from an accredited distance learning institution. Graduating students from AGU who are qualified to gain membership will receive a personalized Certificate of Membership and the Delta Epsilon Tau gold Key of distinction.

Criteria to be recognized for DET:

1. Graduation from AGU with a minimum 3.75 GPA
2. Overall score of 90% or above on the comprehensive exam or rating of "Excellent" on the project
3. Active participation in AGU activities
4. Demonstrated leadership and commitment to distance education and learning

Graduates who meet the requirements for DET are sent an invitation for membership from the President of American Graduate University.

## APPENDIX 1

### COURSE LIST

The following is a list of American Graduate University's distance education courses with their corresponding number of lessons.

<b>Course Number and Title</b>	<b>No. of Lessons</b>
601 - Federal Government Contracting	30
602 - Essentials of Management	22
603 - Government Contract Law	21
605 - Supply Management	25
606 - Marketing	24
608 - Law and Contracts	29
610 - Operations Management	21
613 - Business Development & Proposal Preparation	15
614 - Logistics Management in Government Acquisition	26
615 - Supply Chain Management	21
616 - Global Logistics Management	22
619 - Pricing and Financial Management	26
625 - Program Management	30
627 - Managing Projects	17
628 - IT Project Management	24
629 - Technical Program Management	19
631 - Contract Management and Administration	18
632 - Contracting and Procurement	21
635 - Negotiation - Principles and Practices	15
636 - Negotiation for Project Managers	25
647 - Earned Value Management Systems	18
651 - Source Selection	21
653 - Business Research Methods	22
657 - Management Accounting and Control	29
659 - Organizational Behavior and Human Resources	19
661 - Financial Management	28
663 - Management Economics	27
671 - Building and Managing Project Teams	20
679 - Risk Analysis and Management	21
687 - Project Quality Management	22
695 - Management Information Systems	23

The tuition for all distance education courses is \$825.00.

## APPENDIX 2

### PREPARING FOR A CASE STUDY

A case study is neither a textbook nor a novel. Although the author may have provided a few questions to ponder, there are no answers to memorize. So how, exactly, are you supposed to learn from it?

Before you approach a case study, it is useful to understand how a case is designed to work. Case study learning is more self-directed and experiential than textbook learning. Instead of passively reading a chapter, listening to a lecture, and asking questions, the participant develops opinions and recommendations about the people, issues and organizations in the case, and defends those opinions and recommendations.

Unlike textbooks, the case does not clearly spell out the lessons to be learned. While there will be questions for the participant to ponder, there are no definitively right or wrong answers. Participants approach cases with their own experiences and assumptions. The answers will be as varied as the participants themselves.

While there are no rights or wrongs on how to answer case questions, there are some “tried and true” ways to analyze the case and prepare for the discussion. The following are tips for approaching a case study.

#### READ AND ENJOY

Case studies at first glance may look deceptively simple. Most, if they are written well, read like a compelling story, portraying a protagonist at a crucial moment in his or her career. It is tempting to read the case passively. In fact, that’s the best way to start a case: sit back and just read – hopefully it will be a page-turner. Do not worry or think about the questions during the first reading; just get some general impressions. If something strikes you, highlight it or jot down some notes in the margins.

#### UNDERSTAND THE PROTAGONIST

Case studies attempt to offer the reader a vicarious leadership and managerial experience. Most cases are told from one or two person’s point of view. That person is the protagonist of the case. To get the most out of a case, the participant should try to get inside the protagonist’s head, to learn what he or she saw, understood and felt. Experiencing the protagonist’s dilemma or success will add to the participant’s understanding of managerial issues in a way that textbooks cannot.

#### THINK LIKE A TROUBLE-SHOOTER, CONSULTANT, OR CHANGE AGENT

Case studies are not textbooks. A textbook outlines exactly what the participant should learn, using a lot of bullet points and sub-titles to keep the reader’s thoughts organized. Case studies are a slice of life of a person, program, company and industry. Most case studies portray a protagonist in the throws of a decision or crisis. It is the participant’s job to organize the facts, make some realistic assumptions, analyze the issues and make recommendations for action.

## ORGANIZE THE FACTS

Once you have read the case, the next step is to go back and dissect it. Reread the case, picking out names, dates, events and other important facts. Then, get out some paper, or your computer, and get organized. The participant should create several documents to help clarify people, roles, issues and events. Some of these documents may be attached to the case as exhibits; otherwise, create your own, such as:

- **Timeliness** – Get an idea of how much time elapsed during the events described in the case. Make note of important events and when they took place. Understand what occurred before that may have affected the event, and what happened afterward as a result of the event.
- **Who's Who** – Some cases can read like *War and Peace* – keeping track of the names can be a challenge. Take some time to write out the names of people featured in the case – note their background, motivations and attitudes toward other characters and events.
- **Organization and Team Charts** – Make organization and team charts for each entity portrayed in the case, noting formal and informal reporting relationships. Understand who has influence over whom, who holds formal authority and who has a strong informal power base. Also try to understand the cultures of the organizations or teams in the case. For example, do small horizontal units or large formal hierarchies characterize the teams or organization? What are the histories and traditions of the organizations and teams? How does structure, culture, history or traditions factor into the current situation?

## ANALYZE THE FACTS

Once you have organized the facts, put on your trouble-shooter, consultant or change agent hat and analyze what all this means. Define the central problem, decision or opportunity to be analyzed. Try to state in a few sentences what you think the case is about. If the case deals with an organizational change, it can be helpful to determine what forces exist both for and against change. Note which forces are most compelling and what can be done to either augment or mitigate them. Do not forget about the environment in which the organization and program exist. Determine what external factors impact the people, teams, and organizations in the case. What is the industry like? Is it highly competitive? Who are the competitors? What are the organization's, program's and team's strengths and weaknesses compared to its competitors? What are the socioeconomic, environmental and technical considerations that impact the program?

## READ THE COLLATERAL MATERIALS

Often additional readings are assigned to go along with the case study. They provide valuable insight and describe the theoretical underpinning of the issues in the case. The readings give the participant a frame of reference through which to view the case and define the learning goals of the case. For example, if the readings deal with successful attempts at implementing change, the central issue in the case is, most likely, also implementing change. Many readings offer guidelines and techniques that can be incorporated into the participant's analysis and recommendations.

## **READ THE EXHIBITS CAREFULLY**

It is tempting to let your eyes glaze over when flipping through the charts, graphs and tables at the end of the case. Exhibits, however, can be the source of background, context and relevant data. This information can be used to clarify case issues. Be careful, however, not to get too bogged down in the details. Keep focused on what is important. In the real world, successful leaders and managers are able to use their time efficiently. Put your effort where it matters.

## **MAKE SOME ASSUMPTIONS**

While reading the case, you may wish you knew more about the specific issues at hand. If you were successful in putting yourself in the protagonist's shoes, you might feel some anxiety about the crisis or decision faced. You will start to think about what you would do when faced with this situation at work, now, or in the past. While the facts cannot be ignored, you can fill in the blanks. You can make reasonable assumptions based on your own understanding of the case, the industry, the external environment and the technical considerations. You can also research certain aspects of the case to augment the material in the case. Do not spend a lot of time on issues that are not central to the case. Remember: you may be asked to defend your position by the instructor; so therefore, be prepared!

## **COME TO A CONCLUSION**

Do not hesitate to actually make a decision; take a stand and recommend a course of action. That is the ultimate goal of the case study - to analyze and then recommend. Along with recommendations, include implementation strategies and ways to measure effectiveness. Finally, you can note where further research is needed. Simply saying that you need to look into things more is not an appropriate response to a case. The protagonist in the case had to come to a decision, and so must you.

## APPENDIX 3

### VA ACADEMIC PROGRESS REQUIREMENTS

Students must complete a course within five months of the start date. VA students must show satisfactory progress by completing a specific number of lessons in each one month period. Each VA student, when registering for a course, will receive a notice specifying how many lessons must be completed within each monthly period to maintain satisfactory progress.

VA students certified at full time (two courses) must complete **both** courses within the five month period.

Students who do not maintain satisfactory progress risk losing their VA benefits. If the required timelines are not met, the following actions will occur:

- Students who do not complete the required number of lessons by the first month of their term will be contacted by a member of the University staff to discuss a study plan.
- Students who do not complete the required number of lessons by the second month of their term will receive a formal warning from the University.
- Students who do not submit any lessons by the second month and have not contacted the University to discuss their lack of progress will be reported to the VA for lack of progress and their benefits could be interrupted.
- Students who continually do not complete the required number of lessons, as indicated on this sheet, could be placed on probation for 30 days. If, during the probationary period the student fails to submit ALL required lessons, and has not contacted the AGU certifying official to discuss a study plan the student will be reported to the VA for lack of progress and benefits may be interrupted.
- Students who have not completed the course by the end of their term must request an extension in writing to Marie Sirney ([mariesirney@agu.edu](mailto:mariesirney@agu.edu)) and an incomplete will be entered on their transcript. The University will then notify the VA of the incomplete. The incomplete must be completed within one calendar year from the date the incomplete was assigned. If the student fails to complete the required lessons within the calendar year, the incomplete will become a grade of "F/I" (Unresolved Incomplete) on the student's transcript.
- Any VA student with two Course Incompletes on their Student Record will not be certified for additional courses until their Course Incompletes are cleared.

## APPENDIX 4

### PROJECT GUIDELINES FOR THE MAM, MCM, MSM, AND MPM DEGREE PROGRAMS

#### Introduction

In partial fulfillment of their degree requirements, American Graduate University (AGU) degree candidates have the option to complete a project in lieu of the comprehensive examination. While the comprehensive examination requires students to rigorously review their entire course of study, a project requires students to combine their academic with their life and business experience and successfully develop and implement a new effort in a real business situation.

#### Examination vs. Project

Both the comprehensive examination and the project provide students with outstanding learning experiences from which to expand their professional skills. The project, however, is a far more rigorous and demanding undertaking.

Research indicates that the comprehensive examination will take an average of 80 hours to complete. AGU requires that the exam be completed within 40 days of student's receipt of the examination package. AGU has no meaningful data on the time requirements for completion of a project. Anecdotal information indicates that acceptable projects take at least *triple* the time commitment to complete due to the necessary planning, research, development, writing and review process. Moreover, students only have 120 days to complete the project, not including final review.

#### Definition

The project as defined by AGU is the development, implementation, documentation and analysis of a new business undertaking. An example might be the development of a business plan for a new business unit, the development and implementation of a negotiating position, or the development of a program or project plan. Projects are limited only by the innovation and resources of individual students.

It must be stressed that the project is a real activity, not a purely academic process; it is not a traditional master's thesis. Students may petition for a project that is purely academic in nature, such as the development of a computer model for a specified business operation, but all such requests must pass the University's thorough review process.

#### Project Proposal

The first step in the project approval process is the project proposal. Prior to requesting the comprehensive exam, degree candidates must petition the University for project approval. A letter to the registrar will meet this requirement. The registrar will open a project file and assign a faculty member to the student. Students will be notified of their project file number and faculty advisor.

Within 21 days of being notified, candidates must submit a detailed project proposal outlining the project. Project proposals must include a detailed explanation of the project, business purpose, needed resources, staffing, budget, and any other pertinent information. If the project is assigned as part of the student's regular business activities, or will become part of a business, a letter from the candidate's immediate supervisor approving the effort is mandatory. Projects that do not directly affect a current business activity will require a defense by the student as to the importance of the project as related to the education of the student or to the body of knowledge of the project's area.

Generally, the longer a period takes, the less likely it is to provide the meaningful and appropriate educational experience required of an advanced degree project. Therefore, before proposing a specific project, students should consider the time and schedule implications, as well as resources necessary to complete. Beginning a project and then finding that it will require significantly greater time and other resources than are available will lead to a delayed degree and possibly an abandoned project.

All proposals will be reviewed by the faculty project committee. Usually, the committee will make comments and return the proposal for adjustments. Only after the faculty committee approves a project proposal is the project considered active, and the student may begin formal work.

The 120 day project period runs from the date of project approval.

### **Work Related Projects Most Appropriate**

Projects are most often directly related to students' professional activities, and the University encourages the transference of academic knowledge to the workplace. Unfortunately, many workplace projects do not meet the University's requirements. In other cases, students propose a project that is already well underway. Both such situations usually result in a project proposal being denied. It is therefore vital that students thoroughly review the project they wish to propose before going through the time-consuming proposal process.

### **Project Guidelines**

Although all projects are unique, they will include some required elements. Each project will be designed in conjunction with the faculty advisor and must meet the requirements of the evaluation committee.

A project might have the following sample structure:

**Project Proposal** - This element is the basis of the project, and outlines what the project intends to accomplish, why, its business purpose and desired result.

**Project History** - This element covers why the project is important to the short or long term success of the business or government organization. How will this project benefit the organization? What goals can be expected to be reached? It sets the stage for the project's implementation.

**Research** - What needs to be known? How will this information be obtained? What methods will be used? What information is gathered? How does it match assumptions? How does the information shape the project?

**Project Design/Requirements** – What does the project look like following the research? What are the project’s requirements in terms of planning, staffing, management, capital or other investment, other resources, scheduling, other?

**Implementation Schedule** – What milestones must be reached? At what milestone will the project be considered operational and in place? When can success measurements be started?

**Project Data/Diary** – Start to finish information on implementation, problems (i.e., research and analysis, policy formation, programming, implementation, feedback, program assessment and adjustment).

**Project Assessment** – Preliminary review and analysis of project success.

**Conclusion** – Final assessment of project by student.

In addition, glossary, indices, charts, research data, shall all be included and indexed. Each project will be written using *The Elements of Style* (Strunk & White) as the style manual. All rules for document submission as outlined in the style manual must be followed.

### **Project Schedule**

Like all business endeavors, the project must have a realistic schedule that also dovetails with the 120-day project schedule. Projects needing greater time periods are probably too extensive for the educational goals of the student and University.

The schedule, with major milestones, must be submitted to the faculty advisor within 21 days of the project’s approval. Each part of the project – each milestone, each project chapter, or each section – must be submitted to the faculty advisor for approval as they are completed. Students may, of course, continue project work while the advisor is reviewing the project submissions. Each project section will not be considered finished until the section has been approved by the faculty advisor.

It is likely that there will be faculty changes or suggestions that will be returned to project students. Where appropriate, these changes must be instituted before the section is considered complete. All project sections must be completed before the project can be considered completed and credit earned. Following successful completion of the project, the student may petition for award of degree.

The difficulty of a project often leads to students underestimating the amount of time needed to complete. In rare instances, students may petition for additional time to complete the project. Such requests are not granted automatically, and students must prove that the additional time is needed due to business situations, rather than lack of planning or underestimation of resources by the student.

The goal of the University is not to force students to conform to a specific schedule for completion, but rather to avoid projects stretching out to unmanageable lengths. That is why the University forces a realistic evaluation of projects prior to approval.

## **Submission Of Copies**

Following completion of the project, the student is required to submit the copy in a professional format. The final document will be archived in the University's library. The University reserves the right to cite and quote from the final document, and to review the project in its publications.

## **Faculty Advisor**

Since all projects are unique, much project design and structure will be developed with the faculty advisor. Students will be able to communicate with their advisors by mail, or depending on the schedule of the faculty member, by phone. Direct meetings with the faculty advisor are desired, but all expenses associated with such meetings are borne by the student.

## **Questions**

Any questions concerning these guidelines should be addressed to: AGU Faculty Project Committee, or the designated faculty advisor. Phone: (626) 966-4576; FAX (626) 915-1709.

## APPENDIX 5

### PROJECT GUIDELINES FOR THE MBA DEGREE PROGRAM

#### **Introduction**

In fulfillment of their MBA degree requirements, American Graduate University (AGU) degree candidates have to complete a project. The project requires students to combine their academic experience with their life and business experience and successfully develop and implement a new effort in a real business situation.

#### **Definition**

The project, as defined by AGU, is the development, implementation, documentation and analysis of a new business undertaking. Examples might be the development of a business plan for a new business unit, the development and implementation of a contract analysis and negotiating position, the development of a program or project plan, or the development and implementation of a new business process. Projects are limited only by the innovation and resources of individual students.

It must be stressed that the project is a real activity, not a purely academic process; it is not a traditional master's thesis. Students may petition for a project that is purely academic in nature, such as the development of a computer model for a specified business operation, but all such requests must pass the University's review process.

#### **Project Proposal**

The first step in the project approval process is the project proposal. Degree candidates must petition the University for project approval. A letter or e-mail to the registrar will meet this requirement. This communication should contain a short description of the project. The registrar will open a project file and assign a faculty member to the student. Students will be notified of their project file number and faculty advisor.

Within 21 days of being notified, candidates must submit a detailed project proposal outlining the project. Project proposals must include a detailed explanation of the project, business purpose, needed resources, staffing, budget, and any other pertinent information. If the project is assigned as part of the student's regular business activities, or will become part of a business, a letter from the candidate's immediate supervisor approving the effort is mandatory. Projects that do not directly affect a current business activity will require a defense by the student as to the importance of the project as related to the education of the student or to the body of knowledge of the project's area.

Generally, the longer a project takes, the less likely it is to provide the meaningful and appropriate educational experience required of an advanced degree project. Therefore, before proposing a specific project, students should consider the time and schedule implications, as well as resources necessary to complete. Beginning a project and then finding that it will require significantly greater time and other resources than are available will lead to a delayed degree and possibly an abandoned project.

All proposals will be reviewed by a faculty project committee. Usually, the committee will make comments and return the proposal for adjustments. Only after the faculty committee approves a project proposal is the project considered active, and the student may begin formal work.

The 120 day project period runs from the date of project approval.

### **Work Related Projects Most Appropriate**

Projects are most often directly related to students' professional activities, and the University encourages the transference of academic knowledge to the workplace. Unfortunately, many workplace projects do not meet the University's requirements. In other cases, students propose a project that is already well underway. Both such situations usually result in a project proposal being denied. It is therefore vital that students thoroughly review the project they wish to propose before going through the time-consuming proposal process.

### **Project Guidelines**

Although all projects are unique, they will include some required elements. Each project will be designed in conjunction with the faculty advisor and must meet the requirements of the evaluation committee.

A project might have the following sample structure:

**Project Proposal** – This element is the basis of the project, and outlines what the project intends to accomplish, why, its business purpose and desired result.

**Project History** – This element covers why the project is important to the short or long term success of the business or government organization. How will this project benefit the organization? What goals can be expected to be reached? It sets the stage for the project's implementation.

**Research** – What needs to be known? How will this information be obtained? What methods will be used? What information is gathered? How does it match assumptions? How does the information shape the project?

**Project Design/Requirements** – What does the project look like following the research? What are the project's requirements in terms of planning, staffing, management, capital or other investment, other resources, scheduling, other?

**Implementation Schedule** – What milestones must be reached? At what milestone will the project be considered operational and in place? When can success measurements be started?

**Project Data/Diary** – Start to finish information on implementation, problems (i.e., research and analysis, policy formation, programming, implementation, feedback, program assessment and adjustment).

**Project Assessment** – Preliminary review and analysis of project success.

**Conclusion** – Final assessment of project by student.

In addition, glossary, indices, charts, research data, shall all be included and indexed. Each project will be written using *The Elements of Style* (Strunk & White) as the style manual. All rules for document submission as outlined in the style manual must be followed.

## **Project Schedule**

Like all business endeavors, the project must have a realistic schedule that also dovetails with the 120-day project schedule. Projects needing greater time periods are probably too extensive for the educational goals of the student and University.

The schedule, with major milestones, must be submitted to the faculty advisor within 21 days of the project's approval. Each part of the project – each milestone, each project chapter, or each section – must be submitted to the faculty advisor for approval as they are completed. Students may, of course, continue project work while the advisor is reviewing the project submissions. Each project section will not be considered finished until the section has been approved by the faculty advisor.

It is likely that there will be faculty changes or suggestions that will be returned to project students. Where appropriate, these changes must be instituted before the section is considered complete. All project sections must be completed before the project can be considered completed and credit earned. Following successful completion of the project, the student may petition for award of degree.

The difficulty of a project often leads to students underestimating the amount of time needed to complete. In rare instances, students may petition for additional time to complete the project. Such requests are not granted automatically, and students must prove that the additional time is needed due to business situations, rather than lack of planning or underestimation of resources by the student.

The goal of the University is not to force students to conform to a specific schedule for completion, but rather to avoid projects stretching out to unmanageable lengths. That is why the University forces a realistic evaluation of projects prior to approval.

## **Submission Of Copies**

Following completion of the project, the student is required to submit the project in a professional format. The final document will be archived in the University's library. The University reserves the right to cite and quote from the final document, and to review the project in its publications.

## **Faculty Advisor**

Since all projects are unique, much project design and structure will be developed with the faculty advisor. Students will be able to communicate with their advisors by e-mail, or depending on the schedule of the faculty member, by phone. Direct meetings with the faculty advisor are desired, but all expenses associated with such meetings are borne by the student.

## **Questions**

Any questions concerning these guidelines should be addressed to: AGU Faculty Project Committee, or the designated faculty advisor. Phone: (626) 966-4576, Ext. 1006; FAX (626) 915-1709.