

MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMS

Master of Science Degree (MS)

The Master of Science (MS) degree is awarded in recognition of the successful completion of substantial post-baccalaureate study in a chosen field.

The master's degree requires the equivalent of no less than two semesters of satisfactory graduate work and such additional work as may be prescribed for the degree by the major department. The requirement for a thesis is determined by the department offering the degree. The thesis program consists of at least 30 credit hours, with no more than six semester hours for Research for Master's Thesis (course 5980) included in the 30 hours. The non-thesis program consists of at least 32 hours and a comprehensive examination. Students should consult specific departmental requirements found elsewhere in this bulletin. Credit hours previously presented and counted for one master's degree may not be applied toward satisfying the requirements of a second master's degree, with the exception of approved dual-degree programs.

When permitted by program policy, students who do not hold the master's degree in the doctoral field, have passed the General Examination for the doctoral degree, and do not plan to continue the doctoral program, may be awarded the appropriate master's degree provided they make formal application for the master's degree upon passing the General Examination, meet all program requirements, and secure the recommendation of the major department and approval of the Graduate Dean.

Master's Dual Degrees Program

The generic dual degree program will permit students to select from already existing master's degree programs to officially pursue, when appropriate, two master's degrees simultaneously. This program allows students to tailor electives and areas of emphasis to meet their educational goals through the Health Sciences Center and the Norman campus. Students must be admitted to both programs before 12 credit hours of program work are completed in either program. All requirements for the degrees, including research tools, foreign languages, comprehensive examination, thesis, and deficiencies, must be met for both programs. Up to 20% of the total graduate credits required for both degrees may be double counted. The student must graduate with both degrees the same semester.

Accelerated Dual Degree Program

The accelerated dual degree program establishes a framework of rules by which academic units may offer students the option of earning combined bachelor's and graduate degrees in an accelerated manner. The program allows students with 30 hours of advanced standing credit to earn both the bachelor's and the master's degrees within three to four years of matriculation. Interested applicants should contact the academic programs of interest to design a degree plan.

Special Master's Degree Program

Because departmental majors do not always provide for the needs of students desiring unusual training or combinations of courses, consideration will be given to proposals for special programs of study

leading to the master's degree. The guidelines given below must be followed in implementing this degree program:

1. The student must be admitted in full standing to a graduate program authorized by the State Regents to award a master's degree.
2. The student must submit to the Graduate Dean a written request for approval of a special program prior to the completion of the first 12 graduate hours of enrollment. The request must include:
 - a. a two-page rationale for the program;
 - b. a proposed degree designation;
 - c. proposed courses; and
 - d. a proposed thesis topic, if the thesis option is chosen.
 This request must be signed by three graduate faculty members who agree to serve as the student's Advisory Committee. The request will be referred to the Graduate Council.
3. If the proposal is approved by the Graduate Council, the statement submitted under (2) above will constitute the student's program of study. Request for changes must be submitted to the Graduate Dean.
4. The student's Advisory Committee will designate one of its members to be the major professor who will supervise the student in the program and chair the committee. The major field usually will be the program of the major professor and must be an area in which the University is authorized to award the master's degree.
5. The degree designation and the transcript will reflect the student's major field.
6. The Advisory Committee will be responsible for administering the comprehensive examination or approving the thesis, if the thesis option is chosen.

General Master's Degree Requirements

Transfer Credit for Master's Degrees

The acceptance of transfer credit from another institution for a master's degree at OUHSC is determined in accordance with the following criteria:

1. A maximum of 25% of the minimum number of credit hours required for the master's degree may be transferred from other institutions. Eight transfer hours may be accepted in a 30-hour program.
2. An exception to the 25% limit on transfer credit is made for courses taken from an accredited institution through electronic media approved in advance by the department and Graduate College. Residence credit is granted for graduate level coursework taken via electronic media when taught by a member of the University of Oklahoma graduate faculty. A student working toward a graduate degree may be permitted to apply credit earned from other accredited institutions via electronic media in an amount not to exceed 50% of his/her total degree program. In no instance can the total number of credit hours transferred including electronic media, exceed 50% of the degree program.
3. The coursework transferred must represent valid graduate credit earned in graduate level courses from an accredited college or university. Credit earned by advanced standing will not apply toward a graduate degree.
4. The credit must carry a grade of A, B, or S.
5. The credit must be applicable to the degree program.
6. The transfer credit must not be more than six years old at the time of admission to the degree program. In special cases, credit more than six years old may be transferred if recommended and validated by the program and approved by the Graduate Dean. The

departmental procedures to validate the student's current knowledge and competency must have the approval of the Graduate Dean.

7. Credit from a professional degree program such as the MD, DDS or DVM may be applied toward a graduate degree as transfer credit, provided that such courses carry a grade of A, B, or S and have been approved for graduate credit by the academic institution of origin.
8. Graduate coursework completed at OU Norman and OU Tulsa is considered residence credit. Upon approval of the department and the Graduate Dean, these hours may be used without limitation as credit toward a master's degree.
9. Credit hours previously presented and counted for one master's degree or certificate may not be applied toward satisfying the requirements of a second master's degree or certificate with the exception of approved dual degree programs.
10. All transfer coursework must be approved by the department and the Graduate Dean. Departments with transfer rules more stringent than those listed in this section shall take precedence and will be listed in the programs section of this bulletin
11. Transfer credit is considered neutral in computing the University of Oklahoma grade point average for the purpose of determining academic status, probation, and graduation.

Time Limits for Completing Master's Degrees

A student registered in a master's degree program typically will complete work within six calendar years after the student's first graduate enrollment at University of Oklahoma Health Sciences. Programs with shorter time limits have so indicated in the section of this bulletin that refers specifically to their program.

When additional time is necessary and appropriate, the student and advisor will petition the student's program for an extension. The extension may be denied, in which case the student will be dismissed, or it may be granted with qualification. The program must inform the student, advisor, and Graduate Dean of its decision in writing. If the extension exceeds one year, approval by the Graduate Dean is required. Extensions needing approval by the Graduate Dean will require that the department or program unit certify that the student's knowledge will be current and appropriate to the degree at the time the degree is awarded. Graduate credit taken at the University of Oklahoma or at another accredited university that is to be applied toward a master's degree may not be more than six years old at the time of admission or readmission to the Graduate College. No more than one-quarter of the credit hours (transfer credit and residence credit) applied toward a master's degree can be more than six years old at the time of graduation. To compensate for an expired course, the student should complete a more advanced course on the same topic as the expiring course. The new course must be worth equal or greater hours to the expiring course. If the expiring course carries a letter grade, the new course should also carry a letter grade.

A student's registration in a master's degree program is terminated upon receiving the degree. To continue studies in the Graduate College, re-application in another graduate degree program or as a special student must be made and approved.

Outline of Graduate Work

Students are required to file an Outline of Graduate Work (<http://graduate.ouhsc.edu/CurrentStudents/FormsandGuidelines.aspx>) within the first year of graduate study. This form serves as the student's guideline for courses needed to complete degree requirements. Once filed, any changes in the Outline of Graduate Work must be explained and

documented in writing and consistent with the Admissions to Candidacy form.

Admission to Candidacy

Students who are doing satisfactory graduate work may normally be admitted to candidacy for a degree as soon as they have enrolled in sufficient hours for the degree. The MS Request for Candidacy (https://graduate.ouhsc.edu/Information-For/Current-Students/Academics/#MS_Forms) form available from the Graduate College should be filed with the Graduate College at the beginning of the semester in which the student expects to graduate. (Consult the academic calendar for the specific deadline.) Also, at the time the Admission to Candidacy is filed with the Graduate College students should obtain instructions governing the completion of coursework, graduation and thesis preparation, if applicable.

Selection of the Thesis Committee and Topic

A master's thesis is the product of the candidate's research endeavor. It should be original in the field and must be original for the student. A student writing a thesis should choose a topic and a thesis committee consistent with procedures established by the sponsoring program. The committee must consist of a major professor and at least two other OUHSC or OU Norman graduate faculty members as approved by the Graduate Dean. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that approval, if appropriate, has been granted from all regulatory offices, i.e., Institutional Review Board for use of human subjects, Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee for use of animals, etc.

Continuous Enrollment Requirements for 5980

Initial enrollment in 5980, Research for Master's Thesis, must be for at least two hours. Subsequently, each graduate student must maintain continuous enrollment during each semester in at least two hours of 5980 until the requirements for the degree are completed or candidacy for the degree is terminated. Enrollment in 5980 during the summer session is required if work is being done on the thesis.

The continuous enrollment requirement will be waived for a student who is not working on the thesis but enrolled in full-time coursework. However, if thesis work is being done, a student must enroll in 5980 regardless of the number of other hours of enrollment. Exceptions to the continuous enrollment requirement will be considered on an individual basis by petition to the Graduate Dean.

The faculty advisor will determine the number of 5980 credit hours for each enrollment on the basis of the amount of faculty and University services and resources required by the individual student, but each enrollment will be for two or more hours. A student working full time on the thesis and using University facilities should be enrolled as a full-time student during regular semesters and the summer session. See the Enrollment section in this bulletin for information on full-time enrollment requirements. Such enrollments must be completed during the regular registration period.

An enrollment of less than full time requires the signature of the student's major department chairperson as well as the faculty advisor.

A graduate student who does not comply or has not complied with the enrollment provisions above must enroll during the semester in which graduation is expected in the exact number of hours of 5980 that would have been completed under continuous enrollment. In addition, a late enrollment fee must be paid for each of those semesters. The Graduate College and the Office of Recruitment and Admissions shall determine

the number of hours of 5980 in which the student must enroll during the final semester of the degree program.

Thesis Reading Copy

The master's candidate should prepare and distribute reading copies of the thesis to each committee member. The reading copy should be in an acceptable format and must include all figures and tables, numbered pages and a complete bibliography. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure the thesis format complies with the Graduate College standards as defined in the "Guidelines For the Preparation of the Master's Thesis and Doctoral Dissertation (http://graduatecollegebulletin.ouhsc.edu/filemanagerUploads/Graduate_College_Bulletin/Guidelines%20for%20Preparation%20of%20the%20Masters%20Thesis%20and%20Doctoral%20DissertationNov2019.pdf)".

When the reading copy has received preliminary approval of the major professor, it should be submitted to the Graduate College along with a memorandum from the major professor indicating approval of the reading copy and listing the members of the reading committee. If a tentative defense date has been scheduled, it may be indicated in the memorandum from the major professor. Reading copy deadlines are printed on the Academic Calendar for each semester found on the Admissions and Records website (<http://admissions.ouhsc.edu/>).

Students must submit their reading copy to the Graduate College as a PDF document. The committee will read and determine whether the thesis demonstrates the student's discipline. They may accept or reject it. If rejected, the student will be given another opportunity to submit an acceptable thesis to the committee and the Graduate College. If they accept it, they may require changes and corrections.

When the thesis is acceptable and a degree check indicates the student has completed all course work with acceptable grades, the student may schedule the final oral defense.

Defense of the Thesis

At least 10 working days prior to the defense of the thesis, the chair of the student's committee must send a memorandum including a list of all committee members, the date of the defense, and a Request for Thesis Defense (https://graduatecollegebulletin.ouhsc.edu/filemanagerUploads/Graduate_College_Bulletin/MS%20Thesis%20Defense%20Request.pdf) form to the Graduate College.

The defense may be oral, written, or a combination of oral and written. It may be restricted to the defense of the thesis and/or cover the coursework required for the degree. Advances in electronic media have made it possible for the oral defense to be held without the presence of every member at the same location. The Graduate College must be notified of remote participation in advance of the defense. The student, the committee chair, and a majority of thesis committee members must be physically present at the same location. Other committee members may participate remotely via audio or video conference. Nevertheless, the integrity and significance of the oral examination process must not be compromised by the absence of a sound committee. Copies of electronic signatures for committee members who have been approved to participate remotely will be accepted on the Authority Report Form for the Thesis Defense. Original signatures from all members are required on the final thesis signature page.

Within 72 hours after the thesis defense, the authority form must be returned to the Graduate College with the results and signatures of all committee members. A unanimous vote concerning the candidate's

performance in defending the thesis is expected; however, some dissenting votes may be cast. If one member dissents, a minority report must be filed with the Graduate Dean. If the committee consists of three members of whom two dissent, the performance is graded as unsatisfactory. If the committee consists of more than three members and two dissents, a minority report must be filed and the Graduate Dean will investigate. The Dean's decision will be final. If more than two members cast an unsatisfactory vote, the defense is to be graded unsatisfactory.

Only one attempt is afforded the candidate in defending the thesis. If the defense is graded unsatisfactory, this decision is final and the defense cannot be repeated. Courses taken prior to failing the thesis defense can count for no more than 25% of the credit hours required for a master's degree at University of Oklahoma Health Sciences. These courses must be applied to an academic program other than the one in which the student failed the defense. The student must gain admission to a different program and have the permission from that department and the Dean of the Graduate College to include any courses used for the previous graduate program.

Time Limit for Depositing Thesis in the Library

Students must submit their thesis in electronic format to the Graduate College through the OUHSC ProQuest Administrator (<http://secure.etdadmin.com/cgi-bin/school/?sitelid=752>). After approval by the Graduate College and the student's mentor, the final copy is uploaded to the OUHSC University Library through ProQuest database. A paper copy of the thesis signature page containing original signatures of the thesis committee or digital signatures of the thesis committee must be submitted to the Graduate College.

The thesis must be delivered to the Graduate College within 60 calendar days of the final defense. Students planning to graduate in a particular semester must meet specific academic deadlines and may not have 60 calendar days available. University graduation deadlines are listed in the OUHSC Academic calendar (<http://admissions.ouhsc.edu/AcademicCalendar.aspx>), and see Section Graduation Deadlines below.

Failure to submit the final copy within 60 days will cause the results of the defense to be set aside, whereupon the student must offer the Graduate College a new reading copy of the thesis that carries preliminary approval of the major professor. When the committee has accepted this new reading copy, the student may schedule the defense of the thesis, according to the policies and procedures defined above.

It is essential that all thesis candidates make themselves responsible for the complete and accurate collation of their materials before turning them in to the Graduate College. If utilizing copyrighted material in the thesis, students must obtain permission from the holder of the copyright for such reproduction; without permission, the author of the thesis is liable to prosecution once the thesis has been made a published document. The student must complete and submit the form "Permission to use Published Materials in Dissertation/Thesis" (<http://graduate.ouhsc.edu/Portals/1056/Assets/documents/Current%20students/Forms%20for%20Current%20Students/Forms%20for%20all%20students/permission%20to%20use%20published%20materials%20in%20a%20dissertation.pdf>) available on the Graduate College website under Current Students/Forms and Guidelines (<http://graduate.ouhsc.edu/Information-For/Current-Students/Academics/>).

Comprehensive Examination for Non-Thesis Master's Students

A comprehensive examination is required of all non-thesis degree candidates seeking a Master of Science degree. At the option of the department, the examination may be written, oral, or a combination of written and oral. Authority to take the Comprehensive Examination must be requested from the Graduate College. The chairperson of the committee must send a memorandum requesting Authority to administer the Comprehensive Examination at least 10 working days prior to the scheduled examination. The Request for the Master's Comprehensive Examination (https://graduatecollegebulletin.ouhsc.edu/filemanagerUploads/Graduate_College_Bulletin/ReqMastersCompExam_8_4_15.pdf) form must list the examination committee consisting of at least three members of the Graduate Faculty and the requested time and location of the examination.

The examination may be individualized to the student's coursework/program of study or may be a standardized examination for all students in the program. The examination should be scheduled during the semester of the student's final enrollment in coursework. The Authority for the Comprehensive Examination form will be issued if the student has filed an Admission to Candidacy form (<http://graduate.ouhsc.edu/CurrentStudents/FormsandGuidelines.aspx>), is in good academic standing and enrolled in at least two graduate credit hours during the semester the examination is to be taken. All degree requirements are expected to be completed the semester the Comprehensive Examination is administered. Degree completion more than one semester following the Comprehensive Examination may require a second Examination.

Within 72 hours after the examination is complete, the authority form must be returned to the Graduate College with the results and signatures of all committee members. If the comprehensive examination is failed, a report must be submitted to the Graduate College indicating whether the student may repeat the examination. This report must also outline the student's deficiencies. A student who fails a second time will no longer be eligible for a master's degree in the academic program in which the examination was failed.

Courses taken prior to failing the comprehensive examination for a second time can count for no more than 25% of the credit hours required for a master's degree at University of Oklahoma Health Sciences.

Graduation Deadlines

The date of Graduation for each term shall be the last day of final examination in the fall, the date of commencement in the spring, and the last day of classes in the summer. To entitle a student to graduate as of that date, all work required for the degree (this includes the depositing the thesis/dissertation in the library and payment of tuition and fees) must be completed prior to the first day of classes of the next semester or summer session. If the student has not completed all the requirements, the student will become a graduate the following semester. It is the student's responsibility to make sure all degree requirements have been met.

The following deadlines apply:

1. **Current Semester Graduate:** All documents (including dissertation final copy) must be to the Graduate College office by 5 PM on the last working day prior to the beginning of the upcoming semester.
2. **Upcoming Semester Graduate Without Enrollment:** All documents (including dissertation final copy) must be to the Graduate College

office by 5 PM on the last working day to enroll for the upcoming semester.

3. **Upcoming Semester With Required Enrollment:** Monday after the final day to add a class, the student must become a graduate of the upcoming semester and must enroll in 2 hours of 5980.

Master's Degree Thesis Timeline/Checklist

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Master's Degree Non-Thesis Timeline/Checklist

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