

Utah Tech University Policy

706: Master's Degree Requirements



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I. Purpose

- 1.1 To set forth the requirements and procedures for completion of a Master's degree at Utah Tech University ("the University").

II. Scope

- 2.1 Applies to all graduate students enrolled in Master's programs, graduate faculty engaged in working with Master's students, and all other faculty and staff associated in any way with Master's programs.

III. Definitions

- 3.1 ***Master's Degree:*** The first level of graduate study beyond the baccalaureate degree that shows a high level of mastery in a particular subject area and requires either a thesis or an equivalent advanced professional experience.
- 3.2 ***Thesis Option:*** Provides students the opportunity to engage in intense original research that culminates in a complex written work overseen and judged by a thesis committee.
- 3.3 ***Non-thesis Option:*** An alternative to the thesis that may include a comprehensive exam, an advanced professional experience, and possibly additional work.
- 3.4 ***Master's Thesis Committee:*** Composed of at least three graduate faculty members who oversee and have final approval/disapproval authority for the written thesis.
- 3.5 ***Comprehensive Master's Exam Committee:*** A standing committee appointed by the department of at least three graduate faculty members who oversee and have final approval/disapproval for the Comprehensive

Master's Exam.

- 3.6 **Major Professor.** The member of a Master's Committee who serves as a candidate's primary academic advisor, principal thesis advisor, and the general mentor for the academic program and research.
- 3.7 **Program of Study.** A written outline of courses and other requirements including any thesis or individual project that is agreed upon by the candidate and the department and that fulfills graduation requirements.
- 3.8 **Candidacy.** Upon acceptance into a graduate program, a student becomes a candidate for a graduate degree after certain academic requirements are completed.
- 3.9 **Comprehensive Exam.** A written exam that certifies a student has achieved a core level of mastery in the relevant discipline.
- 3.10 **Thesis Defense.** The oral presentation and examination of the candidate's completed body of work.

IV. Policy

4.1 Admission Requirements

- 4.1.1 All prospective Master's students, including University seniors, must apply for admissions through the online application system.
 - 4.1.1.1 All required documents, which may vary by program, must be uploaded before the application will be submitted to the selected program for review.
 - 4.1.1.2 Unofficial transcripts may be submitted for the review process. However, once accepted, official transcripts sent from all schools the student has attended are required. Failure to list all schools previously attended or making false or misleading statements on the application may result in cancellation of admission status and/or loss of credit.
 - 4.1.1.3 The application fee must be paid before the application file is sent to the requested program for review.
 - 4.1.1.4 All documents submitted to the University become its property and will not be released to students or other s. Applications and transcripts are destroyed after one year for students who do not attend.

4.1.2 Conditional Admission

- 4.1.2.1 Applicants who do not meet all general admission criteria may be admitted for up to one academic year on a conditional basis, with a minimum GPA of 2.5 upon recommendation of the applicant's department of interest, provided evidence of capacity to do satisfactory work is presented.
- 4.1.2.2 All students admitted on a conditional basis must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- 4.1.2.3 By the end of one academic year of conditional admission, the department must evaluate the student's performance and notify the Office of Graduate Studies and the student of the final action to be taken on the student's admission status as either fully accepting the student or recommending the student be dropped from degree-seeking status.

4.1.3 Provisional Admission

- 4.1.3.1 Students who have applied for admission to a Master's program and who meet the minimum GPA requirements for general admission, but whose credentials were not completed by the admissions deadline, may be admitted provisionally for one semester upon recommendation of the department to which they have applied.
- 4.1.3.2 Final action on provisional applications will be reserved until all credentials and required documents have been received and evaluated.
- 4.1.3.3 One semester only is allowed for students who are admitted provisionally and therefore, it cannot be extended or granted for a second time to the same student.

4.2 General Requirements for All Master's Students

- 4.2.1 Complete either a thesis or undertake another type of advanced professional experience such as a research project or professional internship as outlined in the department's degree plan.
- 4.2.2 Advance to candidacy prior to the final semester after completion of the following requirements:
 - 4.2.2.1 Complete half the program's semester credit requirements with a GPA of not less than 3.0

- 4.2.2.2 Submit the Program of Study (and Thesis Proposal for Thesis Option) approved by the department to the Office of Graduate Studies no later than the start of the final semester.
 - 4.2.2.3 Fulfill any other requirements specified by the department's degree plan.
 - 4.2.3 A maximum of six graduate level semester transfer credits may be applied to a Utah Tech University Master's program if approved by the program department.
 - 4.2.4 Transfer credits must be no older than five years to be considered by the department.
 - 4.2.5 All Master's degree requirements must be completed within six years.
 - 4.2.5.1 The timeframe/clock begins on the first day of the semester that the graduate student is coded as either a graduate non-matriculated student or as a graduate student and uses a course to satisfy the degree requirement.
 - 4.2.5.1.1 Time spent on leave or out of status must be approved by the department in order to not be counted in the six years.
 - 4.2.6 Any grade of C- or below is not accepted by the University for a Master's degree.
 - 4.2.6.1 Departments may have other grade restrictions or requirements that must be maintained.
- 4.3 Graduation Requirements
 - 4.3.1 Students must be in good academic standing as defined in Policy 703.4.4.
- 4.4 Classification of Master's Degrees
 - 4.4.1 Master of Arts (MA) or Master of Science (MS)
 - 4.4.1.1 Includes a minimum of 30 and a maximum of 36 semester hours of course work (see Utah Board of Higher Education Policy R401) unless the degree also qualifies as a professional master's degree (see Section 4.4.2).

4.4.1.2 Must include either a thesis (thesis option) or an advanced project or professional experience (non-thesis option).

4.4.2 Professional Master's Degree

4.4.2.1 Aimed at qualifying for employment in a particular profession such as a degree in Master of Accountancy, or Master of Social Work, and may exceed 36 semester hours of coursework to meet accreditation requirements (see Utah Board of Higher Education Policy R401).

4.4.2.2 Requires an advanced capstone project or professional experience.

4.4.3 Master's Degree with Thesis

4.4.3.1 A Master of Arts or a Master of Science degree, thesis option, requires original research in the form of a thesis.

4.4.3.2 A minimum of three (3) semester hours of research course work must be completed.

4.4.3.3 A minimum of one to three (1-3) semester credits of thesis course work must be completed during the final semester before graduation.

4.4.3.4 All submitted theses must adhere to University style and formatting guidelines.

4.4.4 Non-thesis Master's Degree

4.4.4.1 A Master of Arts or a Master of Science degree, non-thesis option, requires an advanced project or professional experience.

4.4.4.2 The advanced project or professional experience must be described in the Program of Study and approved by the department.

4.5 Master's Committee

4.5.1 Every master's student will work with a Master's Committee of faculty members who will oversee the student's scholarly work or equivalent.

4.5.2 The Master's Committee is composed of at least three University

graduate faculty members who oversee and have final approval/disapproval authority for the written thesis, advanced project, or professional experience.

4.5.2.1 University non-graduate faculty members or qualified experts in the student's area of study who are external to the University may also be included on the Master's Committee.

4.5.3 The Major Professor/Committee Chair must be a Utah Tech University graduate faculty member and in the same program as the candidate. One member of the committee must be from outside the program.

4.5.4 The student will nominate the members of her/his Master's Committee and submit the appropriate form with required signatures identifying the members to the Office of Graduate Studies.

4.6 Comprehensive Exam Committee

4.6.1 When used, the Comprehensive Exam will be offered at a regularly scheduled time, no less often than annually.

4.6.2 A standing committee of at least three graduate faculty members who oversee and have final approval/disapproval authority for the Comprehensive Master's Exam will be appointed by the department.

4.7 Program of Study

4.7.1 Written outlines of courses and other requirements including any thesis or individual project, agreed upon by the candidate and the department and that fulfills graduation requirements, must be filed with Graduate Office and are due prior to start of the final semester before graduation.

4.7.2 Graduate courses must be at the 5000-level or higher (see Utah Board of Higher Education Policy R470).

4.7.2.1 5000-level or higher courses taken for undergraduate credit cannot be applied to graduate program of study.

V. References

5.1 Utah Board of Higher Education Policy R401: Approval of New Programs, Program Changes, Discontinued Programs, and Program Reports

- 5.2 Utah Board of Higher Education Policy R470: General Education, Common Course Numbering, Lower- Division Pre-Major Requirements, Transfer of Credits, and Credit by Examination.

VI. Procedures- N/A

VII. Addenda

- 7.1 Course requirements for each Master's program are found in the current catalog <https://catalog.utahtech.edu/programs/#graduatetext>

Policy Owner: Vice President of Academic Affairs and Provost

Policy Steward: Associate Provost for Academic and Budget Planning

History:

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