

MASTER'S DEGREES, GENERAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The following general requirements apply to all master's programs administered by the Graduate School.

Content of Graduate Program

A minimum of thirty semester hours will be required. A minimum of one-half of the semester hours required for the master's program, exclusive of thesis credits, must be in courses numbered at the 5000 level. Specific graduate programs may require more than the minimum number of hours.

Transfer Credit

The majority of all course work toward completion of any degree must be taken at Baylor. For Master's degrees, the accepted number of transfer credits will be determined by the individual academic departments within the following general guidelines:

- course work must be from an accredited university and appear on a graduate transcript, and
- course work must have been taken within five years immediately prior to matriculation, and
- course work must carry a grade of "B" or better (cannot accept P/F, CR/NC or certificates of completion), and
- none of the transfer course work consists of extension, workshop courses, or master's thesis or doctoral dissertation credits

Prior Learning Assessment

The Graduate School allows programs to develop processes for awarding academic credit for Prior Learning and Professional Experiences through formalized Prior Learning Assessment (PLA). The goal is to recognize learning acquired outside of traditional academic settings while maintaining academic rigor and ensuring that credit is awarded only for learning that is equivalent to the learning outcomes of graduate-level courses. The process must include faculty oversight and align with the guidelines of the American Council on Education.

Time Limitation

The maximum time limit for the master's degree is five years from the time the student first matriculates into the master's program. After this time, the student may request a one-year extension. Once a student's time limit expires, any incompletes with the exception of dissertation or thesis hours will change to an "F". Any student wishing to return to complete their degree after a one year absence, must reapply for admission to graduate school. The student would enter under the current catalog and the appropriate course work for degree completion may be revalidated or not, according to the policy of the individual program in consultation with the Graduate School. Coursework where incompletes have been changed to an "F" may not count in the new program.

Graduation Eligibility

To qualify for a master's degree, students must have a minimum overall grade point average of 3.0 and must have satisfied all course work, practica, project, thesis, or other academic/professional efforts

associated with the degree sought. No member of the Baylor University faculty above the rank of Lecturer may be admitted to candidacy for a graduate degree at the University.

Thesis Examining Committee Composition

The thesis examining committee will include three members of the Baylor Graduate Faculty: the committee chairperson, one other Graduate Faculty member from the student's home department, and a third member, or "outside" member. The outside member must be a Graduate Faculty member whose primary faculty appointment is from a department other than the one conferring the student's degree. The student's mentor will serve as the chairperson of the committee and ensure that formal announcement of the examination is made, that the exam is conducted fairly, and that it is open to the faculty. The "official outside" member helps to ensure a consistent level of quality, rigor, and fairness across all graduate programs at Baylor University and may or may not be actively involved in the thesis. The committee may include additional members (who are not necessarily members of the Graduate Faculty) beyond the minimum required number.

If a candidate fails the comprehensive or oral examination, a second examination may be taken contingent upon the approval of both the department(s) concerned and the Graduate School. No reexamination may be conducted until at least four months has elapsed. (Students in the U.S. Army-Baylor Health Care Administration program are required to take the reexamination within four months from the date of the initial board.) After two failures, no further examination is permitted.

Examinations

Candidates in thesis programs who complete the required program of study and a satisfactory thesis will take an oral examination. The format of the examination will be determined by the student's major department.

Candidates in non-thesis programs who complete the required program of study and any other special degree requirements will take a comprehensive oral examination as determined by the major and, if applicable, minor departments. (A written examination may be required in lieu of the oral examination as a matter of policy only with the prior written approval of the Graduate School.) At the option of a school/department, both an oral and a written examination may be required.

The following policies should be noted regarding the comprehensive or oral examination:

1. All incomplete grades (except in a thesis or scientific research course) must be removed prior to the final oral or written examination.
2. The examination will be conducted by a minimum of two Graduate Faculty Members in the student's major degree program and one pre-approved "outside" member. The "official outside" member must be a Graduate Faculty member whose primary faculty appointment is from a department other than the one conferring the student's degree. The committee must be approved 10 working days prior to the examination by the Graduate School.
3. The examination should give the candidate the opportunity to defend the intellectual substance of the thesis, including the structure of the argument advanced, the methodology used, and the interpretation offered.
4. The examination should be taken by the published deadline for meeting graduation requirements for any given semester. The candidate should arrange the date of the examination with the

chairperson of the examination committee and acquire approval of this date from the Graduate School.