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. Students may not use a course to meet more than one degree requirement.

Transfer Credit

For master's degrees, the accepted number of transfer credits will be determined by the individual academic departments within the following general guidelines:

- 25 percent of the required Baylor course work (excluding internships, practica, and theses) may be petitioned for transfer,
- the total number of transferred credits may not exceed fifteen semester hours,
- course work must be from an accredited university and appear on a graduate transcript,
- course work must have been taken within the five years immediately prior to matriculation,
- course work must carry a grade of "B" or better (cannot accept P/F, CR/NC, or certificate of completion) and
- none of the transfer course work consists of extension or transfer courses.

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.

Filing for Graduation

Students file for graduation within BearWeb. The application portal will be available during the dates listed below.

- Spring Graduation: October 1 - February 1
- Summer Graduation: February 1 - June 1
- Fall Graduation: February 1 - October 1

If you use student loans or other forms of financial aid to pay your bill you should file for graduation as early as possible so that the Student Financial Aid (SFA) office can ensure your award offer for the upcoming year is accurate.

Students pursuing a joint degree program must file for graduation in both programs or schools. If a Ph.D. student seeks to receive a Master’s degree on the way (non-terminal Master’s degree), the student must contact the Assistant Director of Student Records, Alana Schaeper, at Alana_Schaeper@baylor.edu before attempting to apply for graduation in order to have a file opened.

Processing of diplomas takes four to eight weeks. The degree is conferred at the first commencement ceremony following program completion. Ceremonies are held in August, December, and May (see Academic Calendar in this catalog).

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.