

**3341-3-16 Master's degree - General Requirements.**

Applicability	All University Units – Graduate Students
Responsible Office	Office of the Provost
Responsible Administrator	Dean of Graduate College

**(A) Policy Statement and Purpose**

This policy describes general requirements for all master's degrees. Colleges and departments may have additional requirements related to individual degree programs.

**(B) Policy****(1) General Requirements for the Master's Degree****(a) Credit Hours**

All master's degree programs at the university require at least thirty credit hours of graduate course work, twenty-four of which must be earned at the university. Specific credit hour requirements for each program are available in the Graduate Academic Catalog. Course work used to fulfill degree requirements must be within the time limitation as established in the [Time Limits for Degree and Revalidation Policy](#).

**(b) Level of Work**

Graduate credit may be received for courses at the 5000-level or higher. At least eighteen hours of credit in the student's master's degree program must be at the 6000-level or higher.

**(2) Culminating Experiences for Master's Degrees**

All master's degree programs must include a culminating experience that provides students an opportunity to synthesize knowledge and experiences gained throughout the master's program. Programs may offer a thesis option (referred to as Plan I) or other type of culminating experience (referred to as Plan II).

(a) Culminating Experience Plan I: Master's Thesis

(i) Thesis Committee

Each student is responsible for forming a thesis committee upon approval of the thesis topic. The committee is composed of the thesis advisor and a minimum of one other member from the graduate faculty of the student's program or equivalent faculty. Additional committee members may serve. All committee members need to have graduate faculty status. If a student wishes to change committee members after the thesis topic has been approved, they must submit a Thesis Committee Change form.

(ii) Thesis Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to propose a thesis topic, a student must have removed any conditions of admission, and must be in good academic standing.

(iii) Topic Approval

To obtain topic approval, a student must prepare and present a written proposal outlining a plan for conducting original research in the field, following standards within the student's program, and have an approved Thesis Topic Approval form on file in the Graduate College.

If the approved topic or research method changes substantially between the time of topic approval and

the final defense of the manuscript, students must submit a new Thesis Topic Approval Form.

- (iv) Thesis Research Registration and Continuous Registration
  - (a) Students must register for a minimum of three credits of thesis research (6990) as a degree requirement. A maximum of six hours of 6990 may be applied toward degree requirements. A student is expected to register for as many additional hours as are necessary to complete the work.
  - (b) Students must begin to register for thesis research (6990) credits when planning their thesis. Students must then continue to register for at least one credit of 6990 each fall and spring semester (i.e., continuous registration).
  - (c) Students are only required to register for 6990 during summer sessions if they defend a topic or final manuscript, or graduate during that term.
  - (d) Continuous registration is required until the Thesis Defense and Manuscript Approval form has been received by the Graduate College.
  - (e) Students who have submitted a completed Thesis Defense and Manuscript Approval form to the Graduate College by the end of the first day of the semester in which they graduate are not required to register during the graduation semester.
  - (f) Students who do not maintain continuous registration will be required to register for the credits for semesters they have missed.

Tuition will be assessed at the current rates when the registration is processed.

(v) Thesis Manuscript and Final Oral Examination

A degree candidate must submit a complete final draft of the thesis manuscript to the thesis committee sufficiently prior to the date set for the final oral examination.

Unless there are intellectual property issues involved, the program is required to publicize the date, time, and location of the final oral defense to the campus community two weeks before the final oral examination is to be held.

The student must pass a final oral examination (i.e., thesis defense) administered by the thesis committee, and secure that committee's approval of the thesis manuscript.

A Thesis Defense and Manuscript Approval form, inclusive of all required signatures, must be received in the Graduate College by the published deadline.

Prior to the commencement at which the degree is to be conferred, the final, error-free, properly-formatted thesis manuscript approved by the thesis committee must be submitted to OhioLink by the published deadline (MFA – Creative Writing students submit abstract only to OhioLINK, and full hard copy to the BGSU Libraries). Details for this process may be found at the Graduate College's **“Theses & Dissertations” webpage**.

(vi) Re-examination

If a student does not pass the final oral examination (thesis defense), they may take a second examination four months or more after the date of the first oral

examination. Dismissal from the master's program will result if the second oral examination is failed.

(b) Culminating Experience Plan II: Other Culminating Experiences

Master's programs may offer culminating experience options in addition to, or instead of the master's thesis. Examples of suitable culminating experiences include, but are not limited to creative written work, capstone or exit project which may be applied in nature and may or may not involve research, comprehensive examination, supervised field experience, portfolio, recital, or any other integrated learning experience. Culminating experiences may be a standalone experience or be integrated within coursework requirements for the degree.

All culminating experiences will include a final assessment of whether the student has passed or failed.

If a student does not pass the final assessment of their culminating experience, they may take a second assessment four months or more after the date of the first assessment. Dismissal from the master's program will result if the second assessment is failed.

(c) Changing Culminating Experience Plans

If a program offers more than one culminating experience option, a student may request to change culminating experience plans with the approval of the graduate program coordinator.

With approval of the program, up to three 6990 thesis credit hours may be applied towards degree requirements if deemed appropriate.

A graduate student cannot change culminating experience options if they have failed their current culminating experience and their re-examination.

(C) Equity Impact Statement

The policy has been assessed for adverse differential impact on members of one or more protected groups.

Registered Date: September 17, 2020

Amended Date: June 12, 2023