

MASTER'S DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

The Graduate School at Northwestern University offers the degrees of:

- Master of Arts (MA)
- Master of Science (MS)
- Master of Public Health (MPH)
- Master of Fine Arts (MFA)

All Northwestern University graduate students must fulfill a set of requirements regarding:

- M (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/academic-policies-procedures/general-registration/>) master's coursework (p. 1)
- Master's timeline (p. 1)
- Grades (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/academic-policies-procedures/general-registration/#grades>)
- Master's degree completion (p. 1)

Each student's program of study for a master's degree must be approved by the student's academic program. Each student enrolled in a master's program must have a committee and an adviser who advise on plan of study, degree requirements, and thesis and/or final exam, if required.

The adviser and at least two of the master's committee members must be members of the Northwestern University Graduate Faculty (<https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/for-faculty/graduate-faculty-membership.html>). In addition to requirements directly related to awarding of a degree, all students are required to maintain satisfactory academic progress and standards of academic integrity (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/academic-policies-procedures/academic-integrity/>).

Registration and changes of academic program regulations apply to all students across degree programs and disciplines. These policies are subject to change without notice.

Master's Courses

To be eligible for a master's degree, a student must successfully complete at least nine quality letter-graded course units (ABC, not P/NP or S/U) authorized for graduate credit (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/academic-policies-procedures/general-registration/>).

Credit earned at an undergraduate institution or at another graduate school or a professional school may, with program approval, be applied toward the program's coursework requirements, but not toward The Graduate School's minimum coursework requirement. Specific course requirements for the master's degree are listed by program (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/programs-az/#degreesofferedtext>).

No more than one-third of the total units presented for the master's degree may be 499 Independent Study.

Combined bachelor's/master's (accelerated master's) students are permitted to count a maximum of three courses authorized for graduate credit toward both the undergraduate and graduate degrees. Certain programs may have more strict requirements. Students should speak with both the undergraduate and graduate programs about the possibility of double counting up to three units of coursework.

Master's Timeline

Students must complete all the requirements for the master's degree within five years of the date of their initial registration in The Graduate School, which falls on the last day of the 20th quarter. Students who do not complete their degree within five years and were not previously granted deadline extensions related to approved leaves will not be considered in good academic standing and will be placed on academic probation by The Graduate School. Individual programs may have stricter deadlines.

Combined bachelor's/master's (accelerated master's) degree students may complete the combined degree program concurrently (i.e., complete the degree requirements for the bachelor's and master's degrees at the same time) or may complete the undergraduate degree first and then complete the master's degree after having graduated from their undergraduate degree program. Students in the combined degree (accelerated master's) program may not receive the master's degree before the bachelor's degree.

Master's Degree Completion

Final Examination and Graduation Requirements

A minimum of two individuals must serve on the master's committee to confirm that all requirements for degree awarding have been met. At least two members of the committee, including the chair, must be members of the Northwestern University Graduate Faculty (<https://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/for-faculty/graduate-faculty-membership.html>). In order to receive the master's degree, a student must:

- Complete all required coursework and requirements for the degree.
- Complete an Application for a Degree form via TGS Forms in GSTS (<https://gsts.northwestern.edu/>) and receive program approval of the form by the date specified in the Academic Calendar (<https://www.registrar.northwestern.edu/calendars/>).
 - Students who are petitioning for a master's on the way to the PhD in their PhD field of study must **first** submit the "Request for Master's in Primary Field of PhD Study" form via GSTS (<https://gsts.northwestern.edu>). After the "Request for Master's in Primary Field of PhD Study" is approved by The Graduate School the student must submit both the Application for Degree and Master's Degree Completion forms.
- Complete the Master's Degree Completion form via TGS Forms in GSTS (<https://gsts.northwestern.edu/>) and receive program approval of the form by the date specified in the Academic Calendar (<https://www.registrar.northwestern.edu/calendars/>).
- Have at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA and no X, Y, K, or NR grades on the transcript. All grades must be entered and Change of Grade forms submitted by the grade deadline specified in the Academic Calendar (<https://www.registrar.northwestern.edu/calendars/>).
- If required by the program, engage in a culminating academic experience, such as a thesis or oral presentation, or pass a final exam as a part of the program of study for a master's degree. Programs will determine the nature of this culminating experience requirement, with the approval of The Graduate School, and the corresponding number of units of credit, if any. The Graduate School does not collect master's theses or documentation of the academic culminating experience.