The Master of Arts (MA) curriculum is designed to provide broad preparation through research and creativity. Students have the option to pursue a thesis or non-thesis Master of Arts degree.

The MA in Philosophy program is conceived as a terminal program aimed at two purposes. First, to enable professionals and advanced students from other disciplines to complement their training with systematic study of the philosophical concepts most relevant to their specialty. Second, to enable students who may have come to the study of philosophy late in their careers, or who are returning to academic pursuits after pursuing other interests, to continue to enjoy the personal enrichment of philosophy and/or to prepare themselves for doctoral studies at Texas A&M or elsewhere.

Two options for obtaining the MA in Philosophy are available: a non-thesis internship option and a thesis option. Students interested in applying their philosophical skills to other environments, such as education, medicine, law, the military or business, may arrange a professional internship in addition to their thesis research. Depending on their background, applicants may be required to take additional coursework (9 of which may be in other disciplines) in addition to their thesis research. The duties of the committee include responsibility for the proposed degree plan and it must include study in more than one area of specialization, but these areas may be contained within the course offerings of a single department. The degree plan must be completed and filed with the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies prior to the deadline imposed by the student's college, and no later than 90 days prior to the date of the final oral examination or thesis defense.

If the chair of a student's advisory committee voluntarily leaves the University and the student is near completion of the degree and wants the chair to continue to serve in this role, the student is responsible for securing a current member of the University Graduate Faculty, from the student's academic program and located near the Texas A&M University campus site, to serve as the co-chair of the committee. The Department Head or Chair of Intercollegiate faculty may request in writing to the Associate Provost for Graduate and Professional Studies that a faculty member who is on an approved leave of absence or has voluntarily separated from the university, be allowed to continue to serve in the role of chair of a student's advisory committee without a co-chair for up to one year. The students should be near completion of the degree. Extensions beyond the one year period can be granted with additional approval of the Dean.

The duties of the committee include responsibility for the proposed degree plan, the research proposal, the thesis and the final examination. In addition, the committee, as a group and as individual members, is responsible for counseling the student on academic matters, and, in the case of academic deficiency, initiating recommendations to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies. The committee members' approval on the degree plan indicate their willingness to accept the responsibility for guiding and directing the entire academic program of the student and for initiating all academic actions concerning the student. Although individual committee members may be replaced by petition for valid reasons, a committee cannot resign en masse.

Degree Plan

The student's advisory committee, in consultation with the student, will develop the proposed degree plan and it must include study in more than one area of specialization, but these areas may be contained within the course offerings of a single department. The degree plan must be completed and filed with the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies prior to the deadline imposed by the student's college, and no later than 90 days prior to the date of the final oral examination or thesis defense.

This proposed degree plan should be submitted through the online Document Processing Submission System located on the website https://ogsdpss.tamu.edu.

A student submitting a proposed degree plan for a Master of Arts degree should designate on the official degree plan form the program option desired by checking “thesis option” or “non-thesis option.”

Additional coursework may be added to the approved degree plan by petition if it is deemed necessary by the advisory committee to correct
deficiencies in the student’s academic preparation. No changes to
the degree plan can be made once the student’s Request for Final
Examination or Request for Final Examination Exemption is approved by
the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

Credit Requirement
A minimum of 30 semester credit hours of approved courses and
research is required for the thesis option Master of Arts degree. A
minimum of 36 semester credit hours of approved courses is required for
the non-thesis option Master of Arts degree.

Transfer of Credit
A student who has earned 12 hours of graduate credit in residence at
Texas A&M University may be authorized to transfer courses in excess
of the limits prescribed above upon the advice of the advisory committee
and with the approval of the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.
Courses taken in residence at an accredited U.S. institution or approved
international institution with a final grade of B or greater might be
considered for transfer credit if, at the time the courses were completed,
the courses would be accepted for credit toward a similar degree for a
student in degree-seeking status at the host institution. Otherwise, the
limitations stated in the preceding section apply. Coursework in which
no formal grades are given or in which grades other than letter grades
(A or B) are earned (for example, CR, P, S, U, H, etc.) is not accepted for
transfer credit. Courses appearing on the degree plan with grades of D,
F or U may not be absolved by transfer work. Credit for thesis research
or the equivalent is not transferable. Credit for coursework submitted for
transfer from any college or university must be shown in semester credit
hours or equated to semester credit hours. An official transcript from
the university at which the transfer coursework was taken must be sent
directly to the Office of Admissions.

Courses used toward a degree at another institution may not be applied
for graduate credit. If the course to be transferred was taken prior to
the conferral of a degree at the transfer institution, a letter from the
registrar at that institution stating that the course was not applied for
credit toward the degree must be submitted to the Office of Graduate and
Professional Studies.

Grades for courses completed at other institutions are not included in
computing the GPR.

Limitations on the Use of Transfer,
Extension and Certain Other Courses
Some departments may have more restrictive requirements for transfer
work. If otherwise acceptable, certain courses may be used toward
meeting credit-hour requirements for the master’s degree under the
following limitations:

1. The maximum number of credit hours which may be considered for
transfer credit is the greater of 12 hours or one-third (1/3) of the total
hours of a degree plan. The following restrictions apply:
• Graduate and/or upper-level undergraduate courses, taken
in residence at an accredited U.S. institution or approved
international institution, with a final grade of B or greater, will
be considered for transfer credit if, at the time the courses were
completed, the student was in degree-seeking status at Texas
A&M University, or the student was in degree-seeking status at
the institution at which the courses were taken, and if the courses
would be accepted for credit toward a similar degree for a student
in degree-seeking status at the host institution.
• Courses previously used for another degree are not acceptable
for degree plan credit.

2. The maximum number of credit hours taken in post-baccalaureate
non-degree (G6) classification at Texas A&M University which may be
considered for application to the degree plan is 12.

3. A zero credit 684 and 685 course is only allowed for non-thesis
master’s students. Other courses, including 691 research hours, are
not eligible for zero credit.

4. Not more than 12 hours may be used in any combination of the
following categories:
• Not more than 6 hours in combination of 691 (Research) or 684
(Professional Internship) may be used.
• Not more than 8 hours of 685 (Directed Studies) may be used.
• Not more than 3 hours of 690 (Theory of Research) may be used.
• Not more than 3 hours of 695 (Frontiers in Research) may be
used.

5. A maximum of 2 hours of Seminar (681).

6. A maximum of 9 hours of advanced undergraduate courses (300- or
400-level).

7. For graduate courses of three weeks’ duration or less, taken at other
institutions, up to 1 hour of credit may be obtained for each five-day
week of coursework. Each week of coursework must include at least
15 contact hours.

8. No credit hours of 684 (Professional Internship) may be used for the
degree of Master of Arts non-thesis option with the exception of a
student pursuing the Master of Arts in Philosophy, non-thesis option,
who may use up to 6 hours of 684 (Professional Internship).

9. Continuing education courses may not be used for graduate credit.

10. Extension courses are not acceptable for credit.

Exceptions will be permitted only in unusual cases and when petitioned
by the student’s advisory committee and approved by the Office of
Graduate and Professional Studies.

Thesis Option
An acceptable thesis is required for the Master of Arts degree for a
student who selects the thesis option program. The finished work is
expected to be a competently executed development and exposition of
the student’s original research topic. Guidelines for the preparation of
the thesis are available in the Thesis Manual, which is available online at

After successful defense (or exemption) and approval by the student’s
advisory committee and the head of the student’s major department,
a student must submit his/her thesis in electronic format as a
single PDF file. The PDF file must be uploaded to the website, http://
ogaps.tamu.edu. Additionally, a signed approval form must be brought or
mailed to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies. Both the PDF
file and the signed approval form are required by the deadline.

Deadline dates for submitting are announced each semester or summer
term in the “Office of Graduate and Professional Studies Calendar” (see
Time Limit statement). These dates also can be accessed via the website

Before a student can be “cleared” by Thesis and Dissertation Services,
a processing fee must be paid through Student Business Services. This
processing fee is for the thesis/dissertation services provided. After
commencement, dissertations are digitally stored and made available through the Texas A&M Libraries.

A thesis that is deemed unacceptable by the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies because of excessive corrections will be returned to the student’s department head. The manuscript must be resubmitted as a new document, and the entire review process must begin again. All original submittal deadlines must be met during the resubmittal process to graduate that semester.

**Thesis Proposal**

For the thesis option Master of Arts degree, the student must prepare a thesis proposal for approval by the advisory committee and the head of the major department. This proposal must be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies at least 20 working days prior to the submission of the Request for the Final Examination.

Compliance issues must be addressed if a graduate student is performing research involving human subjects, animals, infectious biohazards and recombinant DNA. A student involved in these types of research should check with the Office of Research Compliance and Biosafety at (979) 458-1467 to address questions about all research compliance responsibilities. Additional information can also be obtained on the website http://rcb.tamu.edu.

**Final Examination/Thesis Defense**

A student must pass a final examination by dates announced each semester or summer term in the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies Calendar. To be eligible to take the final examination, a student’s GPR must be at least 3.000 for courses on the degree plan and for all courses completed at Texas A&M which are eligible to be applied to a graduate degree, and there must be no unabsolved grades of D, F or U for any course listed on the degree plan. To absolve a deficient grade, the student must repeat the course at Texas A&M University and achieve a grade of C or better. All coursework on the degree plan must have been completed with the exception of those hours for which the student is registered. For thesis-option students, an approved thesis proposal must be on file in the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies according to published deadlines prior to the final examination or submission of the request for exemption from the final examination.

A request to hold and announce the final examination must be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies a minimum of 10 working days in advance of the scheduled date for the examination. The Office of Graduate and Professional Studies must be notified in writing of any cancellations. A student may be given only one opportunity to repeat the final examination for the master’s degree and that must be within a time period that does not extend beyond the end of the next regular semester (summer terms are excluded).

For thesis option students, the final examination covers the thesis and all work taken on the degree plan and at the option of the committee may be written or oral or both. The final examination may not be administered before the thesis is available to all members of the student’s advisory committee in substantially final form, and all members have had adequate time to review the document. The examination is conducted by the student’s advisory committee as finally constituted. A thesis option student must be registered in the University in the semester or summer term in which the final examination is taken. Persons other than members of the graduate faculty may, with mutual consent of the candidate and the major professor, attend final examinations for advanced degrees. Upon completion of the questioning of the candidate, all visitors must excuse themselves from the proceedings. A positive vote by all members of the graduate committee with at most one dissension is required to pass a student on his or her exam. A department, or interdisciplinary degree program, may have a stricter requirement provided there is consistency within all degree programs within a department or interdisciplinary degree program.

The Report of the Final Examination Form must be submitted with original signatures of only the committee members approved by the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies. If an approved committee member substitution (1 only) has been made, his/her signature must also be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies. If necessary, multiple copies of the form may be submitted with different committee member original signatures. If an approved committee member substitution (1 only) has been made, his/her signature must be included on the form submitted to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

A thesis option candidate may petition to be exempt from his/her final examination provided his/her degree plan GPR is 3.500 or greater and he/she has the approval of the advisory committee, the head of the student’s major department, or intercollegiate chair, if appropriate, and the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies. It is required that the petition for exemption be submitted the same semester the student intends to submit the thesis.

**Non-Thesis Option**

For the non-thesis option, a thesis is not required. A final comprehensive examination is required for all non-thesis Master of Arts students. No examination may be held prior to the mid-point of the semester or summer term in which a student will complete all remaining courses on the degree plan.

No credit hours of 684 (Professional Internship) may be used for the degree of Master of Arts non-thesis option, with the exception of the non-thesis option Master of Arts in Philosophy, for which a student may use up to 6 credit hours of 684.

A maximum of 8 credit hours of 685 (Directed Studies), and up to 3 credit hours of 690 (Theory of Research) and up to 3 credit hours of 695 (Frontiers in Research) may be used toward the non-thesis option Master of Arts degree. In addition, any combination of 684, 685, 690 and 695 may not exceed 25 percent of the total credit hour requirement shown on the individual degree plan.

All requirements for the non-thesis option Master of Arts degree other than those specified above are the same as for the thesis option degree.

**Additional Requirements**

**Residence**

In partial fulfillment of the residence requirement for the degree of Master of Arts, the student must complete 9 resident credit hours during...
one regular semester or one 10-week summer semester in resident study at Texas A&M University. Upon recommendation of the student’s advisory committee and with approval of the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies, a student may be granted exemption from this requirement. Such a petition must be approved, however, prior to the student’s registration for the final 9 credit hours of required coursework.

Students who are employed full-time while completing their degree may fulfill total residence requirements by completion of less-than-full time course loads each semester. In order to be considered for this, the student is required to submit a Petition for Waivers and Exceptions along with verification of his/her employment to the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

See Residence Requirements (http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/degree-requirements).

Continuous Registration
A student in the thesis option of the Master of Arts program who has completed all coursework on his/her degree plan other than 691 (Research) is required to be in continuous registration until all requirements for the degree have been completed. See Continuous Registration Requirements (http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/registration-academic-status).

Time Limit
All degree requirements must be completed within a period of seven consecutive years for the degree to be granted. A course will be considered valid until seven years after the end of the semester in which it is taken. Graduate credit for coursework which is more than seven calendar years old at the time of the final examination (oral or written) may not be used to satisfy degree requirements.

A student who has chosen the thesis option must have the final corrected version of the thesis cleared by the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies no later than one year after the final examination, or approval of a petition for exemption from the final exam, or within the seven-year time limit, whichever occurs first. Failure to do so will result in the degree not being awarded.

Foreign Languages
For the degree of Master of Arts, a reading knowledge (usually represented by two years of college study) of at least one foreign language is normally required.

Application for Degree
For information on applying for your degree, please visit the Graduation (http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/degree-requirements/#graduation) section.