Information regarding our programs and the application process (https://alec.tamu.edu/academics/graduate/how-to-apply/) may be obtained from the ALEC website (https://alec.tamu.edu/academics/graduate/).

Steps to Fulfill a Masters Program (http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/#stepsfulfillagraduateprogramtext)

Program Requirements

Program Requirements

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Student’s Advisory Committee

After receiving admission to graduate studies and enrolling for coursework, the student will consult with the head of his or her major or administrative department (or intercollegiate faculty, if applicable) concerning appointment of the chair of his or her advisory committee. The student’s advisory committee for the Master of Science thesis option degree will consist of no fewer than three members of the graduate faculty, representative of the student’s fields of study and research. The chair or the co-chair of the advisory committee must be from the student’s major department (or intercollegiate faculty, if applicable), and at least one or more of the members must have an appointment to a department other than the student’s major department. The outside member for students in an interdisciplinary program must have an appointment to a department different from the chair of the student’s committee. For the Master of Science non-thesis option, the student’s advisory committee will consist of, at a minimum, two members of the graduate committee faculty and from the student’s major department. Additional committee members may be permitted but are not required.

For the Master of Science thesis option, the chair – in consultation with the student – will select the remainder of the advisory committee. The student will interview each prospective committee member to determine whether he or she is willing to serve. Only graduate faculty members located on Texas A&M University campuses may serve as chair of a student’s advisory committee. Other graduate faculty members located off campus may serve as a member or co-chair (but not chair) with a member as the chair. The chair of the committee, who usually has immediate supervision of the student’s research and thesis, has the responsibility for calling required meetings of the committee and for calling meetings at any other time considered desirable.

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 and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN AGRICULTURAL LEADERSHIP, EDUCATION, AND COMMUNICATIONS

Master of Science (MS) – Thesis Option

The thesis option Master of Science degree program is a campus based research-oriented degree program. The program requires the completion of at least 32 credit hours. Coursework typically consists of 18 credit hours taken in the department; 3-4 of these hours will be credited for the thesis, and a maximum of 12 credit hours of coursework in a supporting field(s) of interest.

Coursework in the supporting fields in the MS thesis option may be in any academic area that contributes to a students’ career objectives. Examples include agricultural leadership, agricultural communications, change management, extension education, international agricultural development, research methods and sociology. Students may obtain employment in a variety of professions, such as sales professionals, extension educators, communications specialists, international agriculture development specialists, program managers or producers, instructional design specialists, and youth specialists.

Master of Science (MS) – Non-Thesis Option

The non-thesis option is a campus based degree program requiring the completion of at least 36 credit hours. Students whose career objectives are concerned with formal or informal education in agriculture may seek the Master of Science non-thesis option: e.g., teaching agricultural sciences, working as an Extension educator, working in sales, in leadership and natural resource management professional roles, in training and development, in instructional design, or international agricultural development. The coursework typically consists of 21 to 24 credit hours in the department and a maximum of 12 credit hours of coursework completed in support areas.

All students completing either degree program option must complete a residence requirement. More information about this residency requirement can be found on the Additional Requirements tab (https://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/colleges-schools-interdisciplinary/agriculture-life-sciences/agricultural-leadership-education-communications/phd/#residence).

In addition to the program requirements required by the Graduate and Professional School, each student is recommended to complete four core courses as part of their degree program to gain content knowledge and skills.

- ALEC 610 Principles of Adult Education
- ALEC 615 Philosophy of Agricultural Education
- ALEC 640 Methods of Technological Change
- ALEC 695 Frontiers in Research
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.

If the chair of the student’s advisory committee is unavailable for an
extended time in any academic period during which the student is
involved in activities relating to an internship, thesis or professional
paper, and is registered for courses such as 684, 691, 692 or 693, the
student may request, in writing, that the department head appoint an
alternate advisory committee chair during the interim period.

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 are
responsible for advising the student on academic matters, and, in the
case of academic deficiency, initiating recommendations to the Graduate
and Professional School.

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. The degree plan must be completed
and filed with the Graduate and Professional School prior to the deadline
imposed by the student’s college or interdisciplinary degree program,
if applicable, and no later than 90 days prior to the date of the final oral
examination or thesis defense.

A student should submit the degree plan using the online Document
Processing Submission System (http://ogsdpss.tamu.edu).

A student submitting a proposed degree plan for a Master of Science
degree should designate on the official degree plan the appropriate
program 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
can be made to the degree plan once the student’s Request for Final
Examination or Request for Final Examination Exemption is approved by
the Graduate and Professional School.

Credit Requirement
A minimum of 32 semester credit hours of approved courses and
research is required for the thesis option Master of Science degree.

A minimum of 36 semester credit hours of approved coursework is
required for the Non-Thesis Option.

Ordinarily the student will devote the major portion of his or her time
to work in one or two closely related fields. Other work will be in supporting
fields of interest.

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 below upon the advice of the advisory
committee and with the approval of the Graduate and Professional
School. Courses taken in residence at an accredited U.S. institution or
approved international institution with a final grade of B or greater may 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 following 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
conferal 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 Graduate and Professional
School.

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

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 or 685 course is only allowed for non-thesis
option master’s students. A zero credit 681 course can be used for
either thesis or non-thesis option 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 8 hours in the combination of 691 (Research),
684 (Professional Internship), or SOPH 680 may be used. Under
normal circumstances, non-thesis masters students may not use
691 hours on their degree plan. However, for non-thesis masters
students who are using 691 hours on the degree plan, see the
Non-Thesis Option section on the Program Requirements page in
the graduate catalog for the degree they are pursuing.
• 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 681 (Seminar).
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. Continuing education courses may not be used for graduate credit.
9. Extension courses are not acceptable for credit.
10. For non-distance degree programs, no more than 50 percent of the
credit hours required for the program may be completed through
distance education courses.
11. To receive a graduate degree from Texas A&M University, students
must earn one-third or more of the credits through the institution’s
own direct instruction. This limitation also applies to joint degree
programs.

Exceptions will be permitted only in unusual cases and when petitioned
by the student's advisory committee and approved by the Graduate and
Professional School.

Thesis Option
An acceptable thesis is required for the Master of Science degree for
a student who selects the thesis option program. The finished work
must reflect a comprehensive understanding of the pertinent literature
and express in clear English, the problem(s) for study, the method,
significance and results of the student's original research. Guidelines for
the preparation of the thesis are available in the Thesis Manual, which is
available online at the Graduate and Professional School website.

After successful defense (or exemption) and approval by the student's
advisory committee and the head of the student's major department
(or chair of the intercollegiate faculty, if appropriate), the student must
submit his/her thesis in electronic format as a single PDF file. The PDF
file must be uploaded to the Graduate and Professional School website.
Additionally, a signed paper approval form with original signatures must
be received by the Graduate and Professional School. The PDF file and
the signed approval form are required by the deadline.

Deadline dates for submitting the thesis are announced each semester
or summer term in the "Graduate and Professional School Calendar" (see
Time Limit statement). These dates also can be accessed via
the Graduate and Professional School website.

Each student who submits a document for review is assessed a one-
time thesis/dissertation processing fee through Student Business
Services. This processing fee is for the thesis/dissertation services
provided. After commencement, theses and dissertations are digitally
stored and made available through the Texas A&M Libraries.

A thesis that is deemed unacceptable by the Graduate and Professional
School because of excessive corrections will be returned to the student's
department head (or chair of the intercollegiate faculty, if applicable). 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 Science degree, the student must prepare
a thesis proposal for approval by the advisory committee and the
head of the major department or chair of the interdisciplinary faculty,
if applicable. This proposal must be submitted to the Graduate and
Professional School 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 Office of Research Compliance and Biosafety website.

Final Examination/Thesis Defense
A student must pass a final examination by dates announced each
semester or summer term in the Graduate and Professional School
Calendar. To be eligible to take the final examination, a student's GPA
must be at least 3.00 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
Graduate and Professional School 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 Graduate and Professional School a minimum of 10 working days
in advance of the scheduled date for the examination. The Graduate and
Professional School 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 dissenion
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 Graduate and Professional School. If an approved committee member substitution (1 only) has been made, his/her signature must also be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School. 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 Graduate and Professional School.

A thesis option candidate may petition to be exempt from his/her final examination provided his/her degree plan GPA 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 Graduate and Professional School. It is required that the petition for exemption be submitted the same semester the student intends to submit the thesis.

Non-Thesis Option
For non-thesis option students, a final comprehensive examination may be required.

The final exam cannot be held prior to the mid point of the semester if questions on the exam are based on courses in which the student is currently enrolled. If a student has completed all required degree plan coursework, the student is not required to be registered for classes in the semester the final examination is administered (unless the student holds an assistantship). For specific final examination requirements, a student should check the program requirements for the degree which the student is pursuing.

Exam results must be submitted with original signatures of only the committee members approved by the Graduate and Professional School. If an approved committee member substitution (1 only) has been made, the member's signature must also be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School.

A student pursuing the non-thesis option is not allowed to enroll in 691 (Research) for any reason and 691 may not be used for credit toward a non-thesis option Master of Science degree. A maximum of 4 credit hours of 684 (Professional Internship), 8 credit hours of 685 (Directed Studies), and up to 3 credit hours of 690 (Theory of Research) or 695 (Frontiers in Research) may be used toward the non-thesis option Master of Science 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 Science degree other than those specified above are the same as for the thesis option degree.

The department head or the chair of an intercollegiate faculty (if appropriate) for the program may approve an exception for a PhD student who changes to a non-thesis option MS degree program after at least one year of PhD studies to use 691 credits toward a non-thesis option Master of Science degree. The department head or chair of an intercollegiate faculty (if appropriate) for the program may approve an exception for a master's student who changes from a MS thesis option degree to a MS non-thesis option degree program to use 691 credits toward a non-thesis option Master of Science degree. In both cases, the student is allowed to use a maximum of 8 credit hours of 685 and 691 combined. Departments, Colleges, and Interdisciplinary Degree Programs may opt to establish higher standards. Further any combination of 684, 685, 690, 691 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 Science degree other than those specified above are the same as for the thesis option degree.

Additional Requirements

### Additional Requirements

#### Non-Thesis Option

For non-thesis option students, a final comprehensive examination may be required.

The final exam cannot be held prior to the mid point of the semester if questions on the exam are based on courses in which the student is currently enrolled. If a student has completed all required degree plan coursework, the student is not required to be registered for classes in the semester the final examination is administered (unless the student holds an assistantship). For specific final examination requirements, a student should check the program requirements for the degree which the student is pursuing.

Exam results must be submitted with original signatures of only the committee members approved by the Graduate and Professional School. If an approved committee member substitution (1 only) has been made, the member's signature must also be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School.

A student pursuing the non-thesis option is not allowed to enroll in 691 (Research) for any reason and 691 may not be used for credit toward a non-thesis option Master of Science degree. A maximum of 4 credit hours of 684 (Professional Internship), 8 credit hours of 685 (Directed Studies), and up to 3 credit hours of 690 (Theory of Research) or 695 (Frontiers in Research) may be used toward the non-thesis option Master of Science 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 Science degree other than those specified above are the same as for the thesis option degree.

The department head or the chair of an intercollegiate faculty (if appropriate) for the program may approve an exception for a PhD student who changes to a non-thesis option MS degree program after at least one year of PhD studies to use 691 credits toward a non-thesis option Master of Science degree. The department head or chair of an intercollegiate faculty (if appropriate) for the program may approve an exception for a master's student who changes from a MS thesis option degree to a MS non-thesis option degree program to use 691 credits toward a non-thesis option Master of Science degree. In both cases, the student is allowed to use a maximum of 8 credit hours of 685 and 691 combined. Departments, Colleges, and Interdisciplinary Degree Programs may opt to establish higher standards. Further any combination of 684, 685, 690, 691 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 Science degree other than those specified above are the same as for the thesis option degree.

Additional Requirements

### Additional Requirements

#### Residence

In partial fulfillment of the residence requirement for the degree of Master of Science, 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. A minimum of 1 credit hour must be in a non-distance education delivery mode. Semesters during which the student is enrolled in all distance education coursework will not count toward fulfillment of the residence requirement. Upon recommendation of the student’s advisory committee, department head or Chair of the Interdisciplinary Program, if appropriate, and with approval of the Office of Graduate and Professional Studies, a student may be granted exemption from this requirement. Such a petition, however, must be approved 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, students are required to submit a Petition for Waivers and Exceptions along with verification of their employment to the Graduate and Professional School.

See Residence Requirements [here](http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/#degreerequirements).

### Continuous Registration

A student in the thesis option of the Master of Science 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 [here](http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/#registrationandacademicstatus).

### 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 copies of the thesis cleared by the Graduate and Professional School within one year of the semester in which the final exam is taken, or a final exam exemption petition was approved. Exams taken in between terms will expire at the end of the term that ended prior to the exam. For example, a final exam taken and passed during the fall 2022 semester will expire at the end of the fall 2023 semester. A final exam taken in the time...
between the summer and fall 2022 semesters will expire at the end of the summer 2023 semester.

**Foreign Languages**

No specific language requirement exists for the Master of Science degree.

**Application for Degree**

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