

# MASTER OF WILDLIFE SCIENCE IN WILDLIFE SCIENCE

The Master of Wildlife Science (MWSC) degree is designed for a student who wants professional graduate training with a management or policy orientation in wildlife or natural resources. It is intended to emphasize the problem-solving skills involved in the use of science and technology to benefit humanity, not as a research degree. The MWSC program provides broad academic training combined with practical experience, to develop problem-solving and management skills, understanding of the interrelationships among ecology, policy and culture as factors that influence natural resource conservation and management, and prepare students for careers with academic institutions, governmental agencies, and private business/industry.

Individuals with a baccalaureate degree from a college or university of recognized standing or qualified Texas A&M University seniors during their last semester may apply for admission to graduate studies to pursue the non-thesis degree of Master of Wildlife Science. A candidate's advisory committee shall specify prerequisite work where necessary.

The MWSC program is designed for students already having established fundamentals in biology and natural resource-related topics. The student must demonstrate problem-solving capabilities. Degree candidates may gain such capabilities by completing a professional internship that is designed to provide meaningful, applied, practical experiences, and which may vary in duration from three to nine months depending on departmental requirements.

This program is also approved for delivery via asynchronous distance education technology.

## Program Requirements

### Program Requirements

Student's Advisory Committee (p. 1)

Degree Plan (p. 1)

Credit Requirements (p. 2)

Transfer of Credit (p. 2)

Limitations on the Use of Transfer, Extension and Certain Other Courses (p. 2)

Final Examination (p. 2)

## Student's Advisory Committee

### On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

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 concerning appointment of the chair of his or her advisory committee. The student's advisory committee for the master's 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 one of the co-chairs of the advisory committee must be from the student's department, and at least one or more of the members must have an appointment to a department other than the student's major department.

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 degree program, 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 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 her/his academic program and located on the respective Texas A&M University campus, to serve as the co-chair of the committee. If the committee chair is on an approved leave of absence, s/he can remain as chair without a co-chair for up to one year with written approval of the Department Head or chair of the intercollegiate faculty. 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 or professional paper and is registered for courses such as 684, 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 professional paper 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 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

### On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

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 deadlines imposed by the student's college, and no later than 90 days prior to the date of the final oral examination.

This proposed degree plan should be submitted through the online Document Processing Submission System located on the website <https://ogsdps.tamu.edu> (<https://ogsdps.tamu.edu/>).

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 is approved the Graduate and Professional School.

## Credit Requirement

### On-Campus Degree Program

A minimum of 36 hours is required for the Master of Wildlife Science degree.

### Distance Education Degree Program

The minimum requirements for the degree are 36 hours of coursework.

## Transfer of Credit

### On-Campus Degree Program

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 Graduate and Professional School. 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 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 Graduate and Professional School.

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

### Distance Education Degree Program

The distance education modality allows a maximum of 9 hours of 300 or 400 level undergraduate transfer courses.

## Limitations on the Use of Transfer, Extension and Certain Other Courses

### On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

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. Any combination of 684, 685, 690 and 693 may not exceed 25 percent of the total credit hour requirement shown on the individual degree plan:
    - A maximum of 8 hours of 684 (Professional Internship) and/or
    - A maximum of 8 hours of 685 (Directed Studies), and
    - Up to 3 hours of 690 (Theory of Research), or
    - Up to 3 hours of 693 (Professional Studies).
  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 691 (Research) may be used.
  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 Graduate and Professional School.

## Final Examination

### On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

The candidate 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 3.000 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 no unabsolved grades of D, F or U can occur 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.

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 cancellation. 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). 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.

A professional paper, which is a scholarly report of a problem solving nature, will be prepared by each student. The professional paper must be submitted to the student's advisory committee for approval prior to the final examination. The final examination will cover all work taken on the degree plan and at the option of the committee may be written or oral or both. The examination is conducted by the student's advisory committee as finally constituted. 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 can have a stricter requirement provided there is consistency within all degree programs within a department.

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.

Master of Wildlife Science degree candidates do not qualify to petition for an exemption from their final examination.

## Additional Requirements

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- Residence (p. 3)
- Time Limit (p. 3)
- Foreign Languages (p. 3)
- Application for Degree (p. 3)

## Residence

### On-Campus Degree Program

A student must complete 12 credit hours in resident study at Texas A&M University to satisfy the residence requirement for the Master of Wildlife Science degree.

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 Graduate and Professional School.

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

### Distance Education Degree Program

The distance education modality does not have any residence requirement.

## Time Limit

### On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

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.

## Foreign Languages

### On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

A foreign language is not required for the Master of Wildlife Science degree.

## Application for Degree

### On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

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.