MASTER OF NATURAL RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT IN NATURAL RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

The Master of Natural Resources Development (MNRD) degree is designed for a student who wants professional graduate training with a management orientation in 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.

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 Natural Resources Development. The candidate’s advisory committee shall specify prerequisite work where necessary.

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 upon departmental requirements.

The degree may be earned in the Departments of Ecosystem Science and Management, Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences, and Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences. It is possible for working professionals to earn this degree via distance education.

Program Requirements

Program Requirements

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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 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 us 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 enrolled in activities relating to an internship or record of study and is registered for 684 or 693 courses, 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 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

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 Office of Graduate and Professional Studies 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://ogsdpss.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 Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

**Credit Requirement**

**On-Campus Degree Program**

A minimum of 36 hours is required for the Master of Natural Resources Development degree.

**Distance Education Degree Program**

The minimum requirements for the degree are 36 hours of distance-based coursework. Explore the list of online courses on the MNRD course offerings page (https://essm.tamu.edu/academics/graduate/prospective/degrees/mnr-distance/distance-courses).

**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. 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 student was in degree-seeking status at the transfer institution, a letter from 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 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.

**Distance Education Degree Program**

The distance education modality allows a maximum of 9 hours of 300 or 400 level undergraduate transfer courses. See above for other transfer credit policies.

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

**On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs**

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. 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), and
   - 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.

11. 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.

12. 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 Office of Graduate and Professional Studies.

**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 Office of Graduate and Professional
Additional Requirements

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