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 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 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
On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Program

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
On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Program
A minimum of 32 semester credit hours of approved courses and research is required for the thesis option Master of Science degree. If a student opts to include a summer internship in their degree plan, 35 semester credit hours are completed.

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

On-Campus and Distance Education 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 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 were accepted for credit toward a similar degree 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 absorbed 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 conferment 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

On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Program

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

9. Extension courses are not acceptable for credit.

10. For non-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

On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Program

An acceptable thesis is required for the Master of Science degree. 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**

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

For the 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**

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

A student must pass a final examination by dates announced each
semester or summer term in the Graduate and Professional School
Calendar. The Graduate and Professional School must be notified in
writing of any cancellation. 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 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. Additionally, all English Language Proficiency
requirements must be satisfied prior to scheduling the examination. If
applicable, an approved thesis proposal must be on file in the Graduate
and Professional School according to published deadlines.

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. Examinations
which are not completed and reported as satisfactory to the Graduate
and Professional School within 10 working days of the scheduled
examination date will be recorded as failures. 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 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.

A 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**

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

The Final Examination is not required for the non-thesis option Master of
Science in Construction Management.

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.