The Master of Science degree in the Department of Petroleum Engineering is a thesis option research-based degree that will prepare graduates with the skills to pursue global opportunities in the petroleum industry. The research skills developed through fundamental courses in multiple areas of petroleum engineering will enable graduates to be successful leaders in the petroleum field of their choice. This program is also approved for delivery via asynchronous distance education technology.

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

Program Requirements

Program Requirements

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Student’s Advisory Committee

On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

The Master of Science in Petroleum Engineering requires a thesis. For the Thesis option, after receiving admission to graduate studies and enrolling for coursework, the student will consult with the head of their 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 MS 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.

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 they are 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 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 student 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 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 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 located on the website https://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 Programs

A minimum of 30 semester credit hours is required for the Master of Science degree.

Transfer of Credit
On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

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 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.

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.
   • 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.
   • Two consecutive semesters of zero credit PETE 681 (Seminar) is required for master's students. 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.
   • 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 master's students may not use 691 hours on their degree plan. However, for non-thesis master's 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.
   • A maximum of 2 hours of 681 (Seminar).
   • A maximum of 9 hours of advanced undergraduate courses (300- or 400-level).
   • 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.
   • Continuing education courses may not be used for graduate credit.
   • Extension courses are not acceptable for credit.
   • For non-degree programs, no more than 50 percent of the non-research coursework required for the program may be completed through distance education courses.
   • 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 Programs

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 student, the method, significance, and results of the student's original research. Thesis formatting must be acceptable to the Graduate and Professional School as outlined in the Guidelines for Theses, Dissertations, and Records of Study.

After successful defense (or exemption) and approval by the student's advisory committee and the head of the student's major department
The student may be given only one opportunity to repeat the final examination. As a registered student, for thesis option students, an approved thesis proposal must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School at least 20 working days prior to the Graduate and Professional School deadline. 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.

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.

**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” (see Time Limit statement). These dates also can be accessed via the Graduate and Professional School website (http://grad.tamu.edu/).

Each student who submits a manuscript 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.

**Final Examination Grading**

The student's advisory committee will conduct this examination. The student's department will promptly report the results of the Final Examination to the Graduate and Professional School via the Academic Requirements Completion System (ARCS) within 10 working days of completion of the final examination. If an approved committee member substitution (1 only) has been made, their approval must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School via ARCS.

If the program requires the advisory committee to include at least one external member – with an appointment to a department other than the student's major department – and the substitution is for the sole external member of the advisory committee, then the substitute must also be external to the student's major department. In extenuating circumstances, with approval of the Graduate and Professional School, an exception to this requirement may be granted.

A thesis option candidate may petition to be exempt from the final examination provided the degree plan GPA is 3.500 or greater and they have 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.

**Additional Requirements**

**Residence**

On-Campus Degree Program

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 Graduate and Professional School, 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 (http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/#degreerequirementstext).

Distance Education Degree Program

The distance education modality does not have any residency requirement.

Continuous Registration

On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

A student in the thesis option of the Master of Science program who has completed all coursework on his or 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/#registrationandacademicstatustext).

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.

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

On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

No specific language requirement exists for the Master of 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/#degreerequirementstext) section.