

Preparing a Program of Study for Master's Degrees

The Program of Study is a formal list of courses a student intends to complete to fulfill the requirements of the degree and should consist solely of courses directly related to the master's degree.

Full-time students **must file their programs before the end of their second semester of graduate study**, and part-time students must do so upon the completion of nine credit hours. The Program of Study should be prepared by the student in consultation with the major professor and supervisory committee. The Program of Study must be approved by all committee members and the head of the academic unit. It is then submitted to the Graduate School for approval by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Program of Study Guidelines

These guidelines should be followed when preparing a program of study:

1. A master's degree requires a minimum of 30 hours. Some programs require additional hours.
2. Course titles, curriculum codes, course numbers, credit hours, and semester taken should be listed on the program of study exactly as they appear on the transcript. Credits that were earned more than six years prior to the semester in which the program of study is approved cannot be accepted. Research hours should be listed as a total, not by semester.
3. Students completing a master's report are required to complete a maximum of two hours of report credit. Students completing a master's thesis are required to complete six to eight research hours. Note carefully the minimum and/or maximum number of research hours required by your degree.

Master's report	2 hours
Master's thesis	6-8 hours
4. No course in the student's major area may be at the 500 level. The use of 500-level supporting courses is restricted to 6 credit hours.
5. No more than 3 hours in problems or other individualized courses may be applied in a 30-hour program or no more than 6 hours in problems or other individualized courses in a program of more than 30 hours.
6. Courses designated as deficiencies at the time of admission cannot be used on a Program of Study. (Please refer to the admission letter sent to you by the Graduate School for deficiencies designated by the department.)
7. Of the 30 to 32 credit hours normally required for the master's Program of Study, at least 18 hours should be at the 700-level or above. This includes the research hours required by the thesis and report options.
8. Normally 10 hours of graduate course work from an accredited university may be included as transfer credit on a Program of Study, provided the course work was not part of another degree. The Graduate School may grant exceptions to this limit when justified by inter-institutional collaborations. Students must receive an A or B in courses to be transferred and

the courses must not have been taken more than six years prior to the semester that the program is approved. If a transfer course is to be taken in the future, the semester should be noted on the program of study. Official transcripts showing courses and grades for transfer credit must be on file in the Graduate School before a Program of Study can be approved.

9. Students pursuing a second master's degree may apply up to six hours of credit from the first master's degree to the Program of Study of the second degree.
10. If any course work on the Program of Study is more than six years old at the time of the final examination, the examination will normally include a section covering material relevant to the outdated courses.
11. If changes need to be made to a Program of Study or the committee after approval by the Graduate School, a Program/Committee change form must be completed. Unless there are extensive changes, a new revised Program of Study does not have to be submitted.

The [Graduate Handbook](#) also contains information about programs of study and other requirements for graduate study at Kansas State. All forms are available on the Graduate School website.

Common Problems

When your Program of Study cannot be approved, either because it violates Graduate Council guidelines or because you have not satisfied certain prerequisites, both you and your committee are confronted by delays and extra work. In an effort to help you avoid such problems, some common reasons Programs of Study are returned are listed below:

1. A course listed may not have been taken for graduate credit, may not have an incomplete or grade below a C and cannot be more than six years old.
2. There are too many credit hours of problems or other individualized study courses listed. A 30-hour master's program may include no more than three such hours.
3. The Program of Study fails to meet the rule that 18 hours must be at the 700-level or higher for a master's degree.
4. The Program of Study includes deficiency courses.
5. Courses listed do not match those appearing on the student's transcript. Course titles, numbers, curriculum codes, and credit hours should appear **exactly** as they appear on the transcript.
6. The Program of Study does not have all required signatures of the student, supervisory committee, the department head, or group chairperson or not all committee members listed are members of Graduate Faculty.
7. The Graduate School has not received official transcripts for all transfer courses, or transcripts show that the courses in question do not qualify for transfer credit.
8. There is no indication on the Program of Study if research activities involve the use of human subjects, radioactive materials, live vertebrates, or bio-hazardous materials.