

Guidelines and Instructions for Completing the Master's Program of Study & Committee Form

A student's Program of Study is a contract created between the student and the committee members that is approved by the department head. This contract establishes the requirements that the student must meet in order to earn a Master's degree from Montana State University.

The Division of Graduate Education (DGE) takes great pride in helping to ensure the quality and integrity of the graduate programs at MSU. The following is a set of instructions and requirements to aid in the process of properly filling out a Program of Study. Please read them carefully. (A more comprehensive description of these policies may be found at www.montana.edu/gradstudies)

As always, please feel free to contact the DGE office directly with any questions.

Personal information Section:

- Complete with the most current and complete contact information.
- Use only your MSU student ID number. Please do not use your social security number.
- The degree you are seeking and the degree title must be filled in.

Committee members Section:

- As a master's student, you must have a minimum of 3 members on your committee. The chair (also known as your major advisor) of your Graduate Committee must be a tenure track (or tenured) faculty member within your department at MSU and the person with whom you will be working with the closest.
- The majority of your committee should be from your department. All committee members must sign and date the form.
- Please attach vitas for all off-campus committee members or faculty affiliates (adjunct faculty, research faculty etc.)
- The department head must also sign to acknowledge the appropriateness of your Program of Study and committee.

Policy and Deadlines:

Master's Programs of Study must be completed by the end of the second semester of registration. (First semester submission is required for one year degrees.)

- Course work may not be more than 6 years old at the time of graduation.
- Transfer credits: a maximum of 9 credits are allowed and cannot be approved without an official transcript from the previous University(s).
- Non-Degree/Reserved credits: a maximum of 9 credits allowed.

PLEASE NOTE: The combination of transfer credits, reserved credits, & non-degree credits may not exceed more than 1/3 of the credits on your Program of Study.

- Pass/Fail: A maximum of 3 credits allowed.
- 500, 570, 576: May not exceed 1/3 of total credits required for degree.
- 570: A maximum of 4 credits for plan "A", 6 credits for plan "B".

- 4XX level courses may be used on a Program of Study: a maximum of 9 credits are allowed
- **PLEASE NOTE:** 400, 470, 476, 489, 588, & 589 courses are not allowed on the Program of Study
- 3XX level courses are not allowed on the program of study.
- Grade Performance on Program of Study: Grades below “C-“ must be repeated.
- “I” grades must be resolved before graduation.
- 3 credits minimum registration is required during the term of comprehensive exams, defense of thesis, and graduation.
- Continuous enrollment (minimum of 3 credits) becomes mandatory once all coursework on the Program of Study is completed or any portion of the comprehensive exam has been taken.

Graded Coursework Section:

- A minimum of 30 credits is required to earn a master’s degree.
- For “**Plan A**” students, 10 thesis credits and 20 coursework credits (9 of which can be at the 4XX level) are required.
- For “**Plan B**” students, a minimum of 21 credits must be at the 5xx level.
- Please list in this section only graded courses used to fulfill degree requirements completed or to be completed at MSU as a degree seeking student at Montana State University.
- Designate how many credits you plan to take for each course in the appropriate semester box you plan to take it.
- Pass/Fail courses, seminars, independent study (570’s), practicum, and internship credits should be listed in this section.

Transfer/ Non-Degree/Reserved Credits:

Please list in this section all graduate credits taken as a Non-Degree Graduate at MSU or at another accredited institution that you wish to apply to your degree program.

You may transfer up to 9 graduate level credits taken at an accredited institution as a graduate student.

A maximum of 9 non-degree credits may be applied towards your degree requirements.

A maximum of 9 reserved credits may be applied towards your degree requirements.

PLEASE NOTE: The combination of transfer credits, reserved credits, & non-degree credits may not exceed more than 1/3 of your program and must be a grade of “B” or better.

Research Credits:

- List all research credits here. 10 thesis credits (590) may be included on a Plan “**A**” program, and a maximum of 6 professional paper/project credits (575) may be included on a Plan “**B**” program.

When listing research credits, you do not need to lay out each semester you intend to take them unless your Committee requires it.

Departmental Requirements:

- Departments may require additional coursework towards your degree that is not part of your Program of Study (i.e. 3xx courses, additional seminars or 570’s, etc.). List all such coursework here.