

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Degree Audit/Program of Study

All students conditionally or unconditionally admitted to a graduate degree program will have access to their degree audit/program of study via their MyBlue account. The degree audit provides a summary of institutional requirements, program requirements and courses required to complete the degree. The degree audit is a student's official program of study for degree completion. All changes to the audit must be approved through the student's advisor/Graduate Program Committee Chair and Office of Graduate Studies and Academic Innovation.

Transfer Credit

Graduate transfer credit hours are earned at another accredited college or university and must be approved by both the Academic Department and the Office of Graduate Studies and Academic Innovation before they can be applied to a Master's or Specialist's Degree program. For programs requiring 30 to 59 credit hours, no more than nine semester credit hours of graduate work may be transferred from outside of the University of Nebraska system (UNO, UNL, UNMC). For programs exceeding 59 credit hours, no more than fifteen semester credit hours of graduate work may be transferred from outside the University of Nebraska system. These limits do not apply to graduate course work completed at any campus of the University of Nebraska. Transfer grades for courses outside the University system must be 3.0 or higher (B- is not accepted). Transfer grades from UNO, UNL or UNMC must be 2.0 or higher (C- is not accepted). Transfer credit hours will not be applied to a student's program of study until the Office of Graduate Studies and Academic Innovation has received an approved exception request by the department and received official transcripts with transfer courses completed and appropriate grades.

Credit/No-Credit Courses

Only six credit hours of courses designated as credit/no-credit may be applied toward a Master's or Specialist Degree. At the graduate level, credit/no credit grading must be a function of the course and may not be the choice of the student.

Graduate students must earn at least a B for credit to be granted.

Graduate-Only Level Course Requirement

Courses selected for a student's Program of Study must include 50% or more of courses restricted to graduate students only (800- and 900-level courses), unless the Graduate Council permits the student to reduce this amount. 800-level courses designated with the letter "P" do not apply to this requirement.

Special Topic Courses

Special topic courses include seminars, workshops and classes that cover topics not generally available in the regular curriculum. These courses are usually offered on a non-repeating basis, and do not require Graduate Council approval. No more than 6 credit hours of special topic course credit hours may be used in fulfilling the requirements for a master's or specialist's degree.

Time Limit for Graduate Degrees

Students are allowed ten years to complete a degree program. Course work over 10 years old at the completion of the degree program will not

be used for a Master's or Specialist Degree. The first day of class of the earliest course taken as a part of the student's program is the beginning of the student's graduate education.

Changes to the Approved Plan of Study

Any substitution of courses or other change in an approved program of study must be recommended from the student by submitting an exception request to his/her advisor within the degree audit system. The changes will then be approved by the Graduate Program Committee Chair and Dean of Graduate Studies and Academic Innovation. Except in unusual circumstances, this approval should be secured prior to the student enrolling in the course to be added to the program of study.

Admission to Candidacy

Admission to a Master's or Specialist's Degree Program does not assure Admission to Candidacy for the degree. A student who wishes to become a candidate for the Master's or Specialist's Degree will file an application for Admission to Candidacy with the department. The department will then forward the application to the Dean of Graduate Studies and Academic Outreach for final approval. To be eligible for candidacy for the degree program, a student must fulfill the following requirements:

1. Course completion: the appropriate time to file for candidacy is after completing the first 1/3 of the program and prior to completing the last 2/3 of the program; these credit hours must be successfully completed through UNK. (For example, on a 36 credit hour program candidacy should be filed after completing 12 credit hours and prior to completing 24 credit hours.)
2. Cumulative GPA must be at least 3.0.
3. If conditionally admitted, the condition of admission must be successfully completed. (Conditional admission is stated on the admission letter.)
4. A student may be refused Admission to Candidacy if the previous college record, performance on departmental qualifying criteria, or quality of graduate work, indicates inability to satisfactorily pursue graduate study.

Comprehensive Examination/Writing Project/Portfolio

At least four weeks prior to the date of graduation, the candidate will be required to show proficiency in the candidate's field of study. The mechanism to indicate this proficiency will be developed and administered by the student's department. The chief objective is to evaluate competencies and the ability to implement knowledge in the candidate's field of study. This may take the form of a comprehensive examination, comprehensive writing project, portfolio, capstone course, or other mechanism determined by the department and is to be completed by dates indicated in the academic calendar (<http://catalog.unk.edu/graduate/calendar/>) of this publication. Students who complete a thesis do not have to complete a comprehensive exam. The oral thesis defense fulfills this requirement.

Thesis Requirements

A writing project (Thesis) provides an opportunity for the student to obtain first-hand experience in research methods under competent direction of a faculty member. The thesis student will register for at least six thesis credit hours on the approved program of study.

At the time a student elects to write a thesis for a Master's Degree, the advisor and the Chair of the Graduate Program Committee concerned shall obtain approval from the Dean of Graduate Studies and Academic Innovation on the composition of the committee by submitting a "Proposed Supervisory Committee" form. This committee will approve a thesis problem and guide the student in the writing of the thesis. The committee will also examine the student in the required oral examination at the completion of the project. The time and place of the examination will be determined by the Chair of the Committee.

The minimum number of committee members will be three. The committee will be composed of the following graduate faculty members:

- The candidate's thesis professor who will serve as chair,
- A member representing the candidate's major discipline (generally from the degree granting institution),
- A third member representing a related field selected at large from the University of Nebraska Graduate Faculty. This member cannot be a member of the candidate's department.
- A fourth member of the thesis committee maybe from outside the University of Nebraska system to serve as a voting member. An Appointment of Special Thesis Committee Member from must be completed and approved by the Graduate Committee Chair and Dean of Graduate Studies and Academic Innovation.

It is the responsibility of the student to follow the writing requirements set by the Office of Graduate Studies and Academic Innovation. Thesis students shall use the "Guidelines for the Preparation of Your Master's Thesis (<http://aaunk.unk.edu/thesisguide/default.asp>)" for their project.

The student must have an oral defense of the writing project. At that time, the supervisory committee must sign the acceptance page of the thesis. Approval of the writing by every member of the supervisory committee is required.

If the candidate fails to pass the oral defense, the committee shall choose one of the following options:

- Recommend to the Dean of Graduate Studies and Academic Innovation that the candidate be reexamined after a specified interval. Means for improvement shall be recommended to the candidate by the committee.
- Recommend to the Dean of Graduate Studies and Academic Innovation that the candidate be refused graduation.

Field Study Requirements

A Field Study provides an opportunity for the student to obtain first-hand experience in research methods under competent direction of a faculty member. The field study writing project may be 3-6 credit hours of graduate credit on the approved program of study.

Students completing a Field Study can request guidelines from their Educational Administration Advisor.