

Program of Study Policies

Program of Study

Using the Graduate *Catalog* for the academic year of admission, the student must complete with his/her graduate committee a program of study consisting of all graduate-level courses required for degree completion according to the University-approved requirements and the program requirements. The student and committee must also identify research skill requirements and/or other requirements for degree completion. A student may be required to take an ESL, LSK, or undergraduate course; however, these courses or an audited course cannot be included on a program of study. Courses taken in previous graduate work that fulfill current degree requirements are not part of the current program of study but are listed on the Attachment Sheet (http://www.grad.msstate.edu/forms/pdf_forms/grad_prog_of_study_attach_ed.pdf) to show fulfillment of the requirement.

A student who has taken a course at the 4000 level is not allowed to enroll in the same course for credit at the 6000 level without explicit permission of the instructor and graduate coordinator of the department offering the course, and the dean of the Graduate School.

Program of Study Changes

If a program of study submitted to the Graduate School subsequently changes, the student must submit an approved change of program form to make required additions and deletions.

Prerequisites

Students may be required by their degree program to take prerequisite or leveling courses. The department will decide when the student has satisfied these requirements. Prerequisites that are part of contingent admission to the program must be met before the student can fulfill graduation requirements.

Transfer and Sharing of Credit Hours

A total of 9 credit hours can be **shared** between two MSU degrees in which a student is enrolled concurrently (see Dual Degrees in this publication). For those cases other than dual degrees, a total of 9 credit hours can be **shared** or **transferred** to a student's program of study. The two potential sources of credit hours are one or both of the following: those earned as a student in a graduate program at another university, whether or not used to satisfy the requirements of a previously earned degree (**transferred**) and those earned in another graduate program at MSU, whether or not used to satisfy the requirements of a previously earned degree (**shared**). Students who transition from an unclassified admission into a degree program may also apply up to 9 hours of unclassified graduate work. Credit hours can be shared between or transferred to degrees of the same or different level. See Transfer Credit below for more information on the Transfer policy.

Transfer Credit

Transfer credit hours from other domestic universities, international universities, or military educational programs may be used to fulfill requirements for graduate degrees at MSU provided they meet the following criteria:

1. where appropriate, credit hours were earned in programs fully accredited by the appropriate regional and national accrediting bodies;
2. credit hours contribute to the current program of graduate study; and
3. credit hours were taken within the appropriate time limit for the current program at completion of the degree (reference General Degree Requirements under Master's, Educational Specialist, or Doctor of Philosophy).

Only courses in which grades of B or higher were earned are accepted for transfer. Courses with grades of Pass/Fail or S/U are not eligible for transfer. Master's or Educational Specialist students can transfer up to 9 hours of courses used to earn a previous degree. At the doctoral level, transfer credit cannot exceed one-half of the coursework requirement.

In all cases, the decision to accept and designate transfer work begins with the student's graduate advisor or committee. Once it is determined that the course meets the required criteria, the student must submit a Transfer Approval Form containing required committee signatures and an official transcript to the Office of the Graduate School (see Transfer Approval Form on the Office of the Graduate School Website). Transfer courses may be given the name that appears on the original transcript but must have the designation of Special Topic (6990/8990). Alternatively, the course may be re-titled using the name, symbol, and number of the equivalent MSU course.

Transfer credit cannot be used to satisfy provisional admission requirements. See the Transfer Credit section under each degree.

Transfer of Domestic Credit

A student seeking to transfer courses from domestic universities is responsible for submitting transcripts, as well as course descriptions and syllabi as required by the graduate advisor or committee for review. The committee will determine those courses appropriate for transfer based on assessment of course content. Credits transferred from domestic universities will be included in the calculation of the student's final grade point average.

Transfer of International Credit

A student seeking to transfer courses from universities outside the US is responsible for submitting transcripts, course descriptions, and syllabi in English for committee review. The committee will determine appropriate courses for transfer based on assessment of course content and will work with the Office of the Graduate School to ensure that the equivalent of a grade of B or higher was earned. The Office of the Registrar will note such courses on the MSU transcript followed by an S. These grades will not be included in the calculation of the student's final grade point average.

Transfer of Military Credit

A student seeking to transfer courses from military educational programs is responsible for submitting transcripts, course descriptions, and syllabi for committee review. The committee will determine appropriate courses for transfer based on assessment of course content and will work with the Office of the Graduate School to ensure that the equivalent of a grade of B or higher was earned. The Office of the Registrar will note such courses on the MSU transcript followed by an S. These grades will not be included in the calculation of the student's final grade point average. Evaluations by the American Council of Education (ACE) may be used by programs in making decisions concerning the transfer of military courses.

Course Retake Policy

A student may retake a course if his/her Request to Retake a Course (http://www.grad.msstate.edu/forms/pdf_forms/request_to_retake_a_course.pdf) request is approved. Only one course per degree can be repeated, and this policy applies to any graduate course taken since the beginning of enrollment in the current program. The repeated course must be taken at MSU. A record of both courses taken will remain on the permanent transcript, and both grades will be included in the computation of the final GPA. **No additional program credit hours are generated from a repeated course.**

Some courses are approved for repeated enrollment and credit (e.g., internships, special topics, thesis, dissertation, etc.), and additional program credit hours can be generated in these cases.

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Minor

A minor is a current block of approved coursework derived from a master's or doctoral degree program or concentration other than the major program and must be approved for a master's, educational specialist, or doctoral program. The option of a minor is at the sole discretion of the major area in which the program is offered and must be designated on the student's program of study. A 3.00 GPA in the minor courses is required.

Up to one-third of the required hours for a minor may be transferred to MSU. Hours transferred toward fulfillment of a minor must be relevant in content to the graduate program when the degree is awarded and must fit within the time-limit requirements for the specific degree.

A minor in a master's program requires

1. at least 9 hours of graduate coursework;
2. approval of the student's major professor;
3. a MSU faculty member from the minor area serving on the student's graduate committee;
4. approval of the graduate coordinator from the minor area; and
5. any additional requirements as specified by the major and minor areas.

A minor in a doctoral program requires:

1. at least 12 hours of graduate coursework;
2. approval of the student's major professor;
3. approval of the graduate coordinator from the minor area;
4. a member from the minor area on the student's graduate committee; and
5. additional requirements specified by the major and minor areas.

Accelerated Programs (Combined B.S./M.S.)

Accelerated Programs (Combined B.S./M.S.) are offered by the departments listed below. These programs permit highly qualified undergraduate students to earn graduate credit during the final year of undergraduate studies. Upon completion of the credits, the students also earn undergraduate credit for the same course(s). For complete information, see the department section of interest in this Catalog.

College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

- Plant and Soil Sciences (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2015-16/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/agriculture-life-sciences/plant-soil-sciences/#text>)

College of Arts and Sciences

- Biological Sciences (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2015-16/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/arts-sciences/biological-sciences>)
- History (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2015-16/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/arts-sciences/history>)

College of Business/Bagley College of Engineering

- Industrial and Systems Engineering (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2015-16/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/engineering/industrial-systems>) /Master of Business Administration (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2015-16/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/business/mba>)

Bagley College of Engineering

- Computer Science and Engineering (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2015-16/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/engineering/computer-science>)
- Electrical and Computer Engineering (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2015-16/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/engineering/electrical-computer>)
- Industrial and Systems Engineering (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2015-16/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/engineering/industrial-systems>)
- Master of Engineering (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2015-16/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/engineering/meng>) (interdisciplinary)