

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 University requirements and the University-approved 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 English as a Second Language (ESL), Learning Skills (LSK), Cooperative Education (CP), or undergraduate course or to audit a course. These courses cannot be included on a program of study.

Courses taken in previous graduate work that fulfill current degree requirements are not included on 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. Use of the Attachment Sheet for this purpose is with the approval of the student's committee.

A student who has taken a course at the 4000 level is not allowed to enroll in the same course 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.

Forms

A list of Degree Program Forms (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/academic-policies/degree-program-forms>) includes links to all required forms.

Prerequisites

As part of their admission to a degree program, students may be required by their department to take prerequisite or leveling courses. These requirements must be met to fulfill program requirements.

Transferred and Shared Credit Hours

Transferred credits are defined as those credits earned in graduate work at another university, whether or not used to satisfy the requirements of a previously earned degree. **Shared** credits are defined as those credits earned in another graduate program at MSU and have been used to satisfy the requirements of another degree.

A total of 9 credit hours can be shared between two MSU degrees in which a student is enrolled, whether concurrently (see Dual Degrees (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/academic-policies/registration/#dualdegreestext>) in this publication) or consecutively.

Students who transition from an Unclassified admission into a degree program may also apply up to 9 hours of Unclassified graduate work regardless of whether they are also transferring or sharing credits.

All transferring or sharing of credits requires approval of the student's graduate committee.

See the Transfer Credit section below for more information on transfer policy as well as details of transfer credit restrictions in the appropriate Degree Requirements section for Master (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/academic-policies/masters-requirements/#programofstudytext>), Educational Specialist (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/academic-policies/educational-specialist-requirements/#programofstudytext>), and Doctor of Philosophy (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/academic-policies/phd-requirements/#programofstudytext>) degrees.

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.
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 grade. 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 grade. 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.

If a student retakes a course, the grade earned in the second completion is included on the student's program of study. Once the course is retaken, the original grade no longer is subject to the University criteria for academic dismissal or degree completion. However, 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.

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.

Minor

A minor is a current block of approved coursework derived from a current MSU degree program or concentration other than the major program. The option of a minor is at the discretion of the major area in which the program is offered and must be approved by the student's major professor and/or graduate committee. The minor coursework is designated on the student's program of study.

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 or educational specialist program must meet the following requirements.

- At least 9 hours of graduate coursework in the minor field of study.
- Approval of the student's major professor and/or graduate committee.
- Approval of the graduate coordinator from the minor area.
- An MSU Graduate Faculty member from the minor area who serves as minor professor on the student's graduate committee.
- Fulfillment of any additional requirements as specified by the major and minor areas.

- A 3.00 GPA on the minor coursework.

A minor in a doctoral program must meet the following requirements.

- At least 12 hours of graduate coursework in the minor field of study.
- Approval of the student's major professor and graduate committee.
- Approval of the graduate coordinator from the minor field of study.
- An MSU Graduate Faculty member from the minor area who serves as minor professor on the student's graduate committee.
- Fulfillment of any additional requirements as specified by the major and minor areas.
- A 3.00 GPA on the minor coursework.

Accelerated Programs

Accelerated Programs 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). University minimum requirements for students to be accepted into an Accelerated Program are a GPA of 3.50 or higher on all undergraduate work and a minimum of 60 hours toward a Bachelor's degree. The academic department may have additional requirements such as the completion of specific courses or a statement of professional interests and goals

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/2016-17/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/agriculture-life-sciences/plant-soil-sciences>)
- Poultry Science (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/agriculture-life-sciences/poultry-science>)

College of Arts and Sciences

- Biological Sciences (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/arts-sciences/biological-sciences>)
- History (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/arts-sciences/history>)

Bagley College of Engineering/College of Business

- Industrial and Systems Engineering (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/engineering/industrial-systems>) /Master of Business Administration (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/business/mba>)

Bagley College of Engineering

- Computer Science and Engineering (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/engineering/computer-science>)
- Electrical and Computer Engineering (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/engineering/electrical-computer>)
- Industrial and Systems Engineering (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/engineering/industrial-systems>)
- Master of Engineering (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/engineering/meng>) (interdisciplinary)
- Mechanical Engineering (<http://catalog.msstate.edu/archives/2016-17/graduate/colleges-degree-programs/engineering/mechanical>)