MASTER'S DEGREES AND SPECIALISTS IN EDUCATION DEGREES

Programs at UNCG leading to a master's degree hold the objective of a reasonable, comprehensive mastery of the subject matter in a chosen field, accomplished through study, training, and experience in research or other scholarly activities.

Summary of Requirements for Master’s Degrees

- Satisfaction of all requirements for admission.
- Submission of plan of study to The Graduate School prior to 50% of program completion.
- Satisfactory completion of all course requirements.
- Achievement of the required B (3.0) GPA overall, for courses listed on the plan of study, and, if required by the department, for the major.
- No more than six semester hours of credit evaluated as C+ (2.3) and/or C (2.0) applied toward the minimum hours required for the degree.
- An applied knowledge of one modern foreign language, or approved option, in programs having this requirement.
- Capstone Experience: The nature of this experience (or combination of experiences) will be left to the discretion of individual academic units. They may include some combination of:
  - comprehensive written or oral examination,
  - thesis or research paper,
  - portfolio,
  - creative work, and/or
  - internship experience.
- Filing of an application for graduation and the final plan of study with The Graduate School by the end of the first week of classes of the term in which the degree will be granted and payment of the graduation fee.
- Payment of all accounts owed the University. Diplomas and transcripts of students owing money to the University will be held until the account is cleared.

All the requirements above must be met by the deadlines stated in the Academic Calendar. Some special programs may have additional requirements not listed above but explained in materials supplied by the major department or school.

Time Limit Master’s Degrees

Advanced degrees awarded from UNCG indicate that our students have current, usable knowledge in their field; therefore, the master’s curriculum, including the thesis, must be completed within five academic years, from the date the first courses carrying graduate degree credit applicable to the student’s program are begun. However, if study for the program extends beyond three years, the student may need to meet new requirements.

Semester Hours Required Master’s Degrees

Minimum semester-hour requirements, which vary with the degree, are stated under the respective departmental program description. Credit that is applied to one master’s degree cannot be applied to another master’s degree. No course below the 500 level will be counted towards graduate degree requirements. In all programs, at least one half of the work credited toward the degree must be in 600-level courses or above.

Plan of Study Master’s Degrees

A plan of study for the master’s degree (or Specialist in Education degree) must be outlined and signed by the student and director of graduate study/designee at the earliest practical time following the student’s admission to The Graduate School, but no later than 50% of the program’s completion. The plan must indicate the following:

- All courses the student is expected to complete as a minimum requirement, including courses required for the major, supporting courses, number of elective hours, and courses recommended for transfer.
- Courses required by the department but not counted toward the degree, including prerequisite courses.
- No more than 6 semester hours of independent study. At the discretion of the department, MFA candidates may earn up to a maximum of 20% of their required hours as independent study hours. (See additional requirements above in order to pursue Independent Study.)
- No more than six semester hours of credit evaluated as C+ (2.3) and/or C (2.0) applied toward the minimum hours required for the degree.
- Capstone Experience.
- Credit earned for STA 667 Statistical Consulting is not applicable to a graduate plan of study.

Copies of the approved plan of study must be filed in the student’s permanent folder in The Graduate School, in the department’s files, and with the student. If changes have been made to the plan of study, a revised plan of study must be submitted to The Graduate School by the end of the third week of classes of the semester in which the student applies for graduation.

Language Requirements Master’s Degrees

Some programs require the student to demonstrate an applied knowledge of a modern foreign language. Exceptions are made at the discretion of the major department.

Foreign students whose native language is not English, who are seeking a master’s degree in which a reading knowledge of a modern foreign language is required, may not offer their native language as satisfaction of this requirement. They may offer a reading knowledge of any other approved modern language, including English. When English is offered, the examination will be of the traditional type and will be administered by the Department of English or by the student’s major department in consultation with the Department of English.

Upon the recommendation of the department, The Graduate School may approve requests for graduate students to pass a maximum of 12 semester hours of undergraduate level language courses by special examination. The results of the examination (S-U) will be posted to the
student’s graduate transcript. Permission will be limited to language skills courses.

**Capstone Experience Master’s Degrees**

The capstone experience may consist of a comprehensive written or oral examination, thesis or research paper, portfolio, creative work, internship, or some combination of these experiences. The requirement can be satisfied after the student has completed at least two-thirds of the minimum program hours. If an unsatisfactory grade is given on the first attempt to satisfy the requirement, no more than one additional attempt is permitted. If the student fails to meet the department’s minimum criteria for the capstone experience on the second attempt, The Graduate School will be notified and will send the student a letter of dismissal from the program.

**The Thesis Master’s Degrees**

Some master’s programs require a thesis; some offer a thesis or non-thesis option. A student in a thesis program prepares a thesis under the guidance of a thesis committee consisting of a chair and two other members appointed by the head of the major department or school. The committee members must hold membership on the graduate faculty. Although all members of the committee may come from the major department, appointment of one member from another department is encouraged.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval is required for research involving human subjects prior to acceptance of a thesis based on such research.

The thesis must conform to rules established by the Graduate Studies Committee in the Guide for Preparation of Theses and Dissertations. The guide can be printed from The Graduate School’s website or paper copies can be obtained from the office at no cost.

An oral examination on the thesis may be required at the discretion of the major department or school, either for the individual or all students in a thesis program.

The process for submitting the thesis to The Graduate School has two components: submitting the approval copy and submitting the final copy. Specific instructions and deadline dates affiliated with each step are available in the Guide and the Academic Calendar.

Students file the thesis electronically via the online submission system available on The Graduate School’s website. The approved electronic submission must conform to the format requirements stated in the Guide and must be uploaded by the deadline dates as specified in the Academic Calendar. Publication of the thesis by UMI Dissertation Publishing/ ProQuest Information and Learning is required by The Graduate School. There is no charge for traditional publishing. However, optional services requested by the candidate during submission may have associated charges.

Maximum credit allowed for the thesis is 6 semester hours. Additional 801 hours may be required to maintain continuous enrollment but will not count toward the degree.

**Transfer Credit Master’s Degrees**

(See Graduate Transfer Credit for more information)

At the master’s and specialist’s levels, credit may be given for graduate work taken at other institutions (including credit earned through the Greater Greensboro Consortium), but certain conditions must be met:

- Transfer credit may not exceed one-third of the minimum number of hours required by the student’s program.
- All credit offered in transfer must have been taken at an accredited graduate school and not have been used to complete the requirements for a degree.
- Such work must have been taken within the five-year time limit.
- The student must have earned a grade of B (3.0) or better on all transfer credit. In a four-letter grading system, only credit earned with either of the top two grades is transferable. The transfer of credit where a grade of P or its equivalent is received in a two- or three-letter grading system (such as P-F, S-U, or H-P-F) reduces hour for hour the number of C grades earned that may count toward the minimum requirement for the degree.
- The credit must be recorded on an official transcript placed on file with The Graduate School.
- It must be approved both by the student’s major department and by the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School.
- It must be necessary to meet specific degree requirements.

Hours only, not grades, may be transferred from other institutions. Quarter-hours do not transfer as semester hours. A fraction of an hour of credit will not be transferred. See sample below:

- 2 quarter hours transfer as 1 semester hour.
- 3-4 quarter hours transfer as 2 semester hours.
- 5 quarter hours transfer as 3 semester hours.
- 6-7 quarter hours transfer as 4 semester hours.
- 8 quarter hours transfer as 5 semester hours.
- 9-10 quarter hours transfer as 6 semester hours.

Students must secure approval from their major advisor and the Vice Provost and Dean of The Graduate School in advance of registration at other universities. In general, however, not less than two-thirds of the total program for the master’s and specialists degrees must be completed at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

All credit to be transferred must come within the time limit described above and must be supported by placing an official copy of the transcript on file in The Graduate School. No credit will be transferred unless it is required to meet specific degree requirements.

No more than 3 semester hours of institute and workshop credit may be counted toward satisfying the minimum requirements for the master’s and specialists degrees.