Policy Statement

This policy sets minimum standards for master's students to maintain academic good standing and satisfactory progress in their degree programs. Programs and collegiate units may have additional and/or more stringent requirements.

I. Requirements Upon Matriculation

1. Students are responsible for knowing all program requirements of their master’s program when they matriculate.
2. Upon matriculation, programs must:
   1. Provide each student a current graduate program handbook, specifying the program’s requirements and policies governing successful degree completion.
   2. Assign each student a temporary advisor.
II. Progress Review

1. **Annual Review**
   1. Programs must review the progress of each master’s student at least once per year. Students deemed not to be in good standing must be informed of the results of the review in writing, with a copy to the student’s advisor.

2. **Degree Plan**
   1. Master’s degree students must have an approved degree plan on file with their collegiate unit in order to defend the master’s thesis/professional engineering design project degree and/or apply for degree clearance. It is recommended that the degree plan be filed at least one term (fall or spring semester) before the intended term of the master’s thesis/project defense and/or application for degree clearance.
   2. Students intending to pursue a minor must include the proposed minor as part of their degree plan prior to the final examination. In master’s programs that do not include a final examination, the proposed minor must be included on the degree plan students must declare the minor prior to filing for degree conferral.
   3. The approved degree plan must be centrally archived in the system of record.

III. Performance Standards

1. **Continuous Enrollment**
   Students are required to enroll every semester (fall and spring) from the time of matriculation until degree conferral except for cases with an approved Leave of Absence on the student’s record.

2. **Time Limit for Earning the Master's Degree**
   All requirements for the master's degree must be completed and the degree awarded within five calendar years after initial enrollment in the graduate program or the more restrictive time frame specified by the program.
   1. Students unable to complete the degree within the time limits described above may submit a Request for Extension to the Maximum Time Limit for approval by their advisor/s, program director of graduate studies, and collegiate unit for one extension of up to 12 months. The extension petition must be submitted by the student prior to the end of the term in which the time limit expires.
Students who are unable to complete the degree within the time limits described above may, with the approval of their advisor/s and program DGS, petition the program and collegiate unit for one extension of up to 12 months. Students must submit the petition for an extension prior to the end of the term in which the time limit will expire.

- If a petition is approved, the student is notified in writing of the expectations for progress and of the expected timeline for completion and award of degree.
- If the petition is denied, the student is notified in writing that the student will be terminated from the graduate program upon expiration of the limit.
- Students who have been terminated under such circumstances may apply for readmission to the program; however, readmission is not guaranteed.

3. **Minimum Grade Requirements**

To remain in good academic standing, students throughout their master's studies must meet the minimum GPA requirement specified by the graduate program or 2.800 (on a 4.000 scale), whichever is higher. Students who have filed a master's degree plan must maintain a 2.800 GPA for courses included on the degree plan. Only courses with grades of A, B, C (including C-) and S can may be counted toward the degree. Students who have not yet filed a degree plan should maintain an overall GPA of 2.800. Students who fall below the program's minimum GPA requirement may be terminated from the program.

4. **S/N grades for courses**

A minimum of 2/3 of the course credits included on a degree plan must be taken A/F.

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**Exception**
Programs with a distinctive student population or approved joint-degree programs may request a program-wide exception to the five-year time limit for earning the master's degree.

This policy does not apply to the M.B.A. [Twin Cities] degrees.

Effective Date

This policy applies to all students admitted after January 1, 2013. Students who matriculated before January 1, 2013 and maintained active student status may choose to continue under the policies in effect when they initially matriculated in their graduate program.

Reason for Policy

This policy creates the framework for communications to students about degree requirements and degree progress expectations and sets minimum standards for satisfactory progress in master's programs. The policy also assists the student and advisor in planning for timely completion of program requirements and provides timely evaluations to students as they proceed through the program; alerts the student and advisor to problems and provides the opportunity to develop best approaches to address those problems; and creates a clear record in cases where a program decides to terminate a student from the master's program.

Assists student and advisor in planning for timely completion of program requirements; provides timely evaluations to students as they proceed through program; alerts student and advisors to problems, and provides opportunity to develop best approach for addressing those problems; creates clear record in cases where program decides to terminate student.
Procedures

● Canceling or Recessing the Doctoral Preliminary and/or Master's or Doctoral Final Oral Examination

There are no procedures associated with this policy.

Forms/Instructions

● OTR 198 - Graduate Degree Plan
● UM 1778 - Master's Degree: Program-Wide Exception to the Maximum Time Limit
\[\text{um1778.docx}\]
● UM 1779 - Master's Degree: Request for Extension to the Maximum Time Limit

Appendices

● Academic Freedom and Responsibility
● Annual Graduate Student Reviews: Guidelines
● Graduate Program Student Handbook: Guidelines
● Required Conditions and Best Practices for Remote Participation in Graduate Examinations
● Mutual Roles and Responsibilities for Faculty and Graduate Students: Guidelines
● Responsible Conduct of Research and Ethical Teaching and Scholarship
● Typical Roles and Responsibilities of the Director of Graduate Studies
Frequently Asked Questions

- FAQ: Master's Degree: Performance Standards and Progress

Contacts

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Definitions

Good standing/good academic standing
Students remain in good standing if they: (a) make timely progress towards degree completion as required by the program and by this policy; (b) maintain a GPA at or above the minimum set by the program and by this policy; and (c) pass all appropriate examinations within the time frame specified by the program.

Responsibilities

Collegiate Units

- Ensure appropriate review of coursework on the degree plan (including any subsequent changes to an approved degree plan); archive the degree plan in the system of record.
- Approve and archive in the central record committee memberships (including any subsequent changes to an approved committee).
- Set a college deadline for students who are requesting an extension to the time limit for completing master's degrees.
- Review and approve program-wide requests for exceptions to the time limit for completing the master's degree, archive requests in the system of record.
Review and approve requests for extensions to the time limit for completing the master’s degree; archive petitions in the system of record.

Departments/Programs
- Clearly state the program requirements for maintaining good standing in the Graduate Program handbook, even if they are identical to the requirements in this policy.
- Ensure that the graduate student handbook is available in accessible formats.
- Review and approve the degree plan (including any subsequent changes to an approved degree plan).
- Provide students with materials related to their annual review in an accessible and documentable format.
- Review and approve requests for extensions to the time limit for completing the master’s degree; notify students in writing of the decision and subsequent actions (i.e., expectations for progress and for the month/year of degree conferral or termination from the program upon expiration of the limit).

Students
- Know all program requirements upon matriculation.
- May elect to continue under the requirements in effect when they matriculated, provided they have remained in good standing, if program requirements change.
- Must obtain the required approvals and file the degree plan with the collegiate unit.
- Must initiate the request for an extension to the maximum time limit for completing the master’s degree, obtain the approval of their advisor/s and program director of graduate studies DGS, and submit their request for an extension by the deadline.

Related Information
- Administrative Policy: Admission for Master’s and Doctoral Degrees
- Administrative Policy: Eligibility to Serve on Graduate Examination Committees
- Administrative Policy: Leave of Absence and Reinstatement from a Leave: Graduate Students
- Administrative Policy: Master’s Degree: Completion
- Administrative Policy: Readmission or Changes to Master’s or Doctoral Degree Objectives

History
Amended:
June 2017 - Comprehensive Review, Minor Revision. 1) Rewrote introduction to clarify the goal of the policy and distinguish from unrelated policies, 2) Added Leave of Absence
language, 3) Clarified language related to conditions that necessarily result in discontinuation from program, 3) Clarified language regarding grading requirements for preliminary examination, removing pass with reservations when recording the final result of the prelim exam, 4) moved language on voting requirements for the prelim from an appendix to the body of the policy. Changes in policy respond to need for greater clarity on policy intent on the part of affected constituencies and enhanced consistency in policy implementation across programs.

Effective:
July 2012 - New Policy, Comprehensive Review. 1. Continues the five year time limit for master’s degrees, but provides a process for requesting a program wide exception for distinction student populations. 2. Requires an annual progress review for all master’s students. 3. Extends applicability of policy requirements to programs not formerly under the aegis of the Graduate School.