Academic Information

Candidates for the master's degrees should note that in most MS programs both the thesis option and the course option are available. The course option may be of particular interest to part-time students who, because of their employment, might find it more convenient than the thesis requirement. All candidates for the master's degrees should consult with their adviser to determine the option they will follow.

All requirements for the master's degrees must be completed within six years from the time the student is admitted to graduate standing. A maximum of six units of graduate credit obtained at institutions other than Washington University may be applied toward the master's degree awarded by Engineering. Transfer credit must be recommended and approved by the department chair or program director and adviser, as well as by the Engineering Registrar. No courses carrying grades lower than B can be accepted for transfer credit.

For the thesis option, a minimum of 24 units of course work and a minimum of 6 units of research are required. The student must also write a satisfactory thesis prepared under the supervision of a member of the Engineering faculty. Candidates for master's degrees under the course option must submit a minimum of 30 units of approved graduate course credit. A department may have additional requirements beyond the above stated minimum requirement. Students should consult with their adviser as several master's degrees require more than 30 graduate units.

To earn more than one master's degree from Engineering, the student's final program of course work for each such master's degree must include a minimum of 15 units of preapproved courses not included as part of the final program of course work for any other master's degree awarded by Engineering.

Master's Thesis

A candidate for the degree Master of Science (thesis option) should prepare his or her thesis according to the Master's Thesis Format Guidelines found on the Engineering website.

The candidate's department chair or program director will appoint a thesis committee of three faculty members, with the student's adviser as chair, who will read the thesis and judge its acceptability. At some point, as per published deadlines, the candidate will then deliver a draft copy of the thesis to the Engineering Student Services Office for format approval. Three copies of the final thesis accepted by the committee and approved for format must be delivered to the Engineering Student Services Office no later than the deadline stated in the online academic calendar. In addition, prior to submission of the final copies, the student must submit the document electronically to Washington University Open Scholarship.

Master's Final Examinations

The final examination for the Master of Science candidates under the thesis option consists of an oral examination conducted by the thesis committee and any additional faculty members that the department or program chairman may wish to designate. At this examination the candidate will present and defend the thesis.

Candidates for the Master of Science under the course option may be required to pass a final examination. The form of this examination is determined by the faculty of the area of specialization, and students should consult their advisers, department chairs, or program directors for details concerning this examination.