

Master's Degree Policies

Degrees Offered

North Dakota State University (NDSU) offers Master of Arts (M.A.), Master of Science (M.S.), and non-thesis master's programs.

M.A. and M.S. students may opt for a Plan A (Thesis) or Plan B (Master's Paper/Comprehensive Study) program. The Plan C (Culminating Experience) option is primarily intended for non-thesis degree programs; however, some M.S. programs do offer the Plan C option. Not all programs offer all three options. In addition, plans may differ in the composition of the student's supervisory committee and required submissions to the Graduate College for degree completion.

Master of Arts/Master of Science Overview

Plan A: Thesis-based Master's

The thesis typically includes a problem statement, a review of existing literature relevant to that problem, and the creation and presentation of new knowledge in providing a solution to the problem. Each student assembles a supervisory committee, as described on the next tab, and is required to pass a final oral examination in which the supervisory committee serves as the examining committee. Following a successful final examination, the student will submit an electronic copy of their thesis to the Graduate College for format review.

Plan B: Master's Paper/Comprehensive Study-based Master's

The student will develop a thorough understanding of existing knowledge and the ability to apply that existing knowledge to a problem of interest. The individual creative component is defined by the program and could include a portfolio or integrated field experience.

Each student is required to pass a final oral examination in which the supervisory committee serves as the examining committee. Following a successful final examination, the student will submit an electronic copy of their master's paper to the Graduate College for format review.

Plan C: Culminating Experience-based Master's

The Plan C option allows each academic program to define a culminating experience such as a capstone course, a written examination, or some other approach to measure the student's understanding of the relevant material in the discipline.

Non-Thesis Master's Programs (Discipline-specific or course-based master's programs)

Master of Accountancy (M.Acc.)

Master of Athletic Training (M.A.Trg.)

Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.)

Master of Construction Management (M.C.M.)

Master of Education (M.Ed.)

Master of Engineering (M.Engr.)

Master of Music (M.M.)

Master of Natural Resources Management (M.N.R.M.)

Master of Public Health (M.P.H.)

Master of Public Policy (M.P.P.)

Master of Software Engineering (M.S.E.)

Master of Supply Chain Management (M.S.C.M.)

Education Specialist (Ed.S.) in Educational Administration