

Academic Information for Master's Degree Students

Goals of Graduate Education:

A graduate student should develop intellectual autonomy within a chosen field and demonstrate the ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate relevant knowledge. The graduate student, furthermore, assumes some responsibility for increasing knowledge within the chosen field.

Graduate education assumes the acquisition of specific content knowledge, including recognition of the significant terminology, facts, theories, issues, findings, and generalizations within the field of study. Graduate study also encompasses comprehension of the intellectual history, methods of inquiry, and standards of judgment used in a given field.

Students should also grasp the ethical meanings of research in a discipline or a profession.

A student receiving a master's degree will be able to:

- Analyze ideas in a logical manner by breaking down material into constituent parts, organizing ideas and relationships between ideas, expressing these relationships, recognizing unstated assumptions, distinguishing facts from hypotheses, and distinguishing statements of cause from statements of effect;
- Synthesize diverse ideas to form an integrated whole relevant to a field of study by arranging and combining elements and parts into patterns or structures. The parts to be integrated may, to the extent necessary, come from a variety of disciplines;
- Make judgments about the value of relevant material, including the appropriateness and adequacy of any qualitative and quantitative methods used in its compilation, by employing a standard of internal or external appraisal. In evaluating the accuracy of a communication, a student will use an integration of theories, works of recognized excellence, facts and generalizations germane to a field; and
- Convey ideas, feelings, and experiences through scholarly writing and discussion with others. The student will be able to develop a proposal or plan of work that includes ways of testing hypotheses, analyzing the factors involved, modifying the hypotheses based on new factors or considerations, and then making generalizations based on findings. The student will then have the ability to communicate both this process and subsequent findings to others.