The Department of Physics and Astronomy offers the master of science degree in physics with the option of a focused area of study in astronomy. Although we offer a course-only MS, our graduate program is mostly oriented toward current physics research.

Research toward a degree may be conducted in either experimental or theoretical areas. Experimental programs include magnetic materials, high-energy physics, materials science, observational extragalactic astronomy, and particle astrophysics. Theoretical programs include condensed matter, elementary particles, atomic and molecular physics, extragalactic astronomy, astrophysics and particle astrophysics.

**Admission Requirements**

A student who wishes to take graduate work leading to the MS or PhD degree should have the equivalent of an undergraduate major in physics, and mathematics through differential equations. Any undergraduate courses required to complete a student's preparation should be taken as soon as possible. A comprehensive background in general physics is considered as important as mastery of a specialized field. To be considered for regular admission, the GRE general test or the GRE subject test in Physics should have a score at the 50th percentile.

General requirements are stated in the Admission Criteria section of this catalog. Specific requirements for physics follow. Note that requirements for students specializing in astronomy differ from those for students in other physics areas.

See the Admission Criteria section of this catalog for more information.

**Requirements for the MS Degree**

**M.S. in Physics (thesis option)**

A total of 24 semester hours of coursework is required (18 of which must be in physics and astronomy), in addition to 6 semester hours of research. Physics students must take:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code and Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PH 501 Classical Dynamics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 531 Electromagnetic Theory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 541 Quantum Mechanics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 571 Statistical Physics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 599 Thesis Research</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 590 Research Techniques</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 597 Physics Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 598 Non-Thesis Research</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Elective Courses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code and Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PH 523 Relativity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 532 Electromagnetic Theory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 534 Digtl Elect Comp Interfc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 542 Quantum Mechanics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 561 Nuclear Particle Physics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 581 Solid State Physics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 585 Magnetism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Hours**

30

All full-time students must take one hour of seminar PH 597 Physics Seminar each semester. Up to three semester hours of pass/fail coursework (PH 597, PH 598 Non-Thesis Research) and up to three semester hours of PH 590 Research Techniques can count toward the 24 hour course requirement. An oral examination covering coursework and the thesis is required for completion of the degree.

**M.S. in Physics (non-thesis option)**

A total of 30 hours of coursework is required, 24 of which must be in physics and astronomy. Students must take:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code and Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PH 501 Classical Dynamics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 531 Electromagnetic Theory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 541 Quantum Mechanics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 571 Statistical Physics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 590 Research Techniques</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 597 Physics Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 598 Non-Thesis Research</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Elective Courses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code and Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PH 523 Relativity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 532 Electromagnetic Theory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 534 Digtl Elect Comp Interfc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 542 Quantum Mechanics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 561 Nuclear Particle Physics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 581 Solid State Physics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 585 Magnetism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Hours**

30

All full-time students must take one hour of seminar PH 597 Physics Seminar each semester. Up to three semester hours of pass/fail coursework (PH 597, PH 598 Non-Thesis Research) and up to three semester hours of PH 590 Research Techniques can count toward the 30 hour course requirement. An oral examination covering coursework is required for completion of the degree.

**M.S. in Physics with Astronomy focused area of study (thesis option)**

A total of 24 semester hours of coursework is required (18 of which must be in physics and astronomy), in addition to 6 semester hours of research (PH 599 Thesis Research). Students must take:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code and Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PH 501 Classical Dynamics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 531 Electromagnetic Theory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 541 Quantum Mechanics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 561 Nuclear Particle Physics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 581 Solid State Physics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 597 Physics Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 598 Non-Thesis Research</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Elective Courses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code and Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PH 523 Relativity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 532 Electromagnetic Theory</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 534 Digtl Elect Comp Interfc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 542 Quantum Mechanics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 561 Nuclear Particle Physics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 581 Solid State Physics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 585 Magnetism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 521 or Theoretical Astrophysics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 533 Observational Techniques</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 590 Research Techniques</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 597 Astrophysics Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 598 Non-Thesis Research</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Hours**

30

All full-time students must take one hour of seminar PH 597 Physics Seminar each semester. Up to three semester hours of pass/fail coursework (PH 597, PH 598 Non-Thesis Research) and up to three semester hours of PH 590 Research Techniques can count toward the 24 hour course requirement. An oral examination covering coursework and the thesis is required for completion of the degree.
M.S. in Physics with Astronomy focused area of study (non-thesis option)

A total of 30 hours of coursework is required, 24 of which must be in physics and astronomy. Students must take:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code and Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PH 501 Classical Dynamics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 531 Electromagnetic Theory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 541 Quantum Mechanics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 521 or Theoretical Astrophysics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 533 Observational Techniques</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 590 Research Techniques</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 597 Astrophysics Seminar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH 598 Non-Thesis Research</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code and Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ECE 593 Special Topics (Control Systems Analysis)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 579 Digital Control Systems</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECE 693 Special Topics (in Precision Timing Applications)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MATH 551 Math Stats W/Applictn I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Elective Courses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code and Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AY 533 or Observational Techniques</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 521 Theoretical Astrophysics</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 550 Stars &amp; Stellar Evolution</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 580 Cosmology</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 630 Stellar and Galactic Dynamics</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AY 640 Radiation Processes Astrophys</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Hours**

30

All full-time students must take one hour of seminar AY 597 Astrophysics Seminar each semester. Up to three semester hours of pass/fail coursework (AY 597, PH 598 Non-Thesis Research) and up to three semester hours of PH 590 Research Techniques can count toward the 30 hour course requirement. An oral examination covering coursework and the thesis is required for completion of the degree.

**Master’s Degrees**

The primary purpose of master’s degree programs is to provide students with subject matter at an advanced level in their fields of study. Master’s degrees are designed to assist students either to continue their graduate studies or to meet the goals of their professions. In most cases, master’s programs also help students become familiar with methods of independent investigation.

**Program Requirements**

Two plans are offered for the master’s degree:

**Plan I.** Candidates for the master’s degree under Plan I must earn a minimum of 24 semester hours of credit in coursework plus earn a minimum of 6 additional hours of thesis research hours, for a total of 30 hours.

**Plan II.** Candidates for the master’s degree under Plan II must earn a minimum of 30 semester hours of coursework credit and pass the comprehensive examination or complete a culminating or “capstone experience” as described under the Comprehensive Examinations section below.

Both plans require a minimum of 18 semester hours in the major subject. With the approval of the major department, the remainder of the coursework may be completed in either the major or a related field.

In some divisions and in many departments of the University, candidates are required to do their work under Plan I. Candidates working under Plan II may be required to participate successfully in seminar or problem courses that will give them an acquaintance with the methods of research and an appreciation of the place and function of original investigation in the field.

**Residency Requirements**

A student’s program at the master’s level must provide sufficient association with the resident faculty to permit individual evaluation of the student’s capabilities and achievements.

**Graduate Credit**

A student must be admitted to the Graduate School and must register as a graduate student in order to receive graduate credit. Approval for graduate registration must be obtained from program advisors prior to registration.

**Graduate Credit for Noncredit Experiences**

All course credit used toward a UA graduate degree must be taught at the graduate level. No graduate credit may be earned by correspondence study or for experiential learning not conducted under the direct supervision of graduate faculty of The University of Alabama. UA does not offer graduate credit for noncredit workshops, seminars, continuing education experiences, professional development, internships, work/life experience, and so forth.

**Transfer of Credit**

Courses of full graduate-level credit earned in a regionally accredited institution where a student was enrolled in the graduate school may be submitted for review for inclusion in a master’s degree program. Evaluation of credit for transfer will not be made until after the student has enrolled in the Graduate School of The University of Alabama. Acceptance of credit requires the approval of the student’s advisory committee and the dean of the Graduate School. Only courses in which a
student earned a "B" grade or better may be transferred. Thesis Research
(599) may not be transferred in from an outside institution.

In some cases, foreign educational credentials may not meet the
Graduate School’s criteria for transfer of credit. It may be necessary
for students in this situation to secure an evaluation of their credentials
from World Education Services Inc. (WES), an external foreign credential
evaluation service. Additional information on their services can be found
at their website.

A student initiates at the Graduate School’s website a Request for
Transfer of Graduate Credit earned at another institution. It is also the
student’s responsibility to assure that the Graduate School receives an
official transcript from the other institution where the transfer credit has
been requested, well in advance of the final semester.

With the approval of the student’s department and the dean of
the Graduate School, the greater of 12 hours or 25 percent of the
required coursework for a master’s degree may be transferred from
another institution. The approved transferred coursework must be
earned during the six-year period (18 fall, spring and summer semesters)
preceding the semester of admission to the UA master’s program.

Departments may have more restrictive timelines. Revalidation or
recertification of graduate credits that will be more than 18 semesters old
at the time of UA master’s program completion is not an option.

Please note that some departments allow fewer than 12 hours of
graduate transfer credit. Be sure to check with your department’s
graduate coordinator regarding your department’s transfer policy.

### 400-Level Courses

A maximum of 6 semester hours of 400-level course credit may be
accepted for a master’s degree program. The department needs to
submit the Approval of 400-Level Course Work for Master’s Credit through
the UA DocuSign system in myBama and is approved by the Graduate
School prior to the semester in which the 400-level coursework will be
taken.

### Time Limit

All requirements for the master’s degree must be completed during the
six years (18 fall, spring, and summer semesters) immediately preceding the
date on which the degree is to be awarded. There is no provision for
an extension of the time limit beyond six years for master’s students.

### Thesis

A thesis evidencing research capacity, independent thought, and the
ability to interpret materials is required of all master’s degree candidates
who pursue Plan I. The subject chosen must be in the major field and
must be approved by the graduate committee of the major department or
school and by the head of the student’s major department or division.

A thesis committee must consist of at least three members appointed
by the dean of the Graduate School. Students set up their committee
through the Graduate Academic Activities portal on the Graduate School
website. The request normally is made as soon as the successful
defense of the thesis proposal has been completed. All members of
a thesis committee must be members of the Graduate Faculty. The
Committee Chair must be a full or associate member of the Graduate
Faculty. One member must be from outside the student’s major
department. The majority of the thesis committee must be full-time
regular University of Alabama faculty. If the outside member is not a full
or associate member of the UA Graduate Faculty (e.g., a highly qualified
person from another university, a business, or industry), the graduate
dean needs to appoint that member by approving Affiliate Graduate
Faculty status for the specific purpose of serving on the student’s thesis
committee. Unless there are extraordinary circumstances meriting
approval by the graduate dean before the final oral defense of the thesis,
all members of the thesis committee must attend the defense.

The candidate must give members of the examining committee a
minimum of two weeks to read the thesis before the date of the final
oral examination. All members must agree that the student is ready for
the final oral thesis defense. A final oral thesis defense is required of all
students completing a thesis. All members of the thesis committee must
be members of the UA graduate faculty and must attend the final oral
thesis defense unless there are extraordinary circumstances warranting
the graduate dean’s approval of the absence prior to the defense meeting.
The final oral thesis defense is the culminating experience in the master’s
program. As such, all members of the thesis committee are expected
to attend and participate in real time. Virtual attendance via interactive
video or teleconference is permitted for off-campus external committee
members, but the student and Tuscaloosa campus faculty should attend
in person unless extraordinary circumstances dictate the need for virtual
attendance. In circumstances where virtual participation is necessary, all
participants must follow the Virtual Participation guidelines found below.

### Virtual Participation

#### Scope and Goals

All members of a student’s graduate committee are expected to attend
and participate, usually in person, in any oral examination as part
of the student’s graduate (Master’s or Doctoral) degree program.

Traditionally, oral examinations are conducted with the student meeting
their committee while gathered in one physical location on campus.

However, the need occasionally arises for virtual participation in the
oral examination. In these cases, graduate programs must ensure
adherence to the following if any graduate-level oral examination
involving the student’s entire thesis/dissertation committee includes
virtual participation.

- The student’s consent must be sought and obtained in advance of
  conducting the oral examination with virtual participants.

- Virtual participation by committee members must include both audio
  and visual capability so that:
  - each committee member can hear the student and view the
    student, any presentation slides, and any demonstrations;
  - the student can hear and view each committee member.

- All committee members must participate interactively and in real-
  time for the entire examination, including any preparatory discussion
  leading up to it, the presentation itself, its discussion and evaluation.

The following sections provide detail on the technical and attendance
requirements for an oral examination with virtual participation.

Departments and programs may enforce stricter guidelines than those
outlined, including an on-campus only policy if deemed necessary and
appropriate.

#### Technical Requirements

Real-time and fully interactive audio and video communications must
be maintained throughout the examination and any related discussion.
The audio/video communications facilities must allow the student and
all committee members to see and hear each other during the entire
examination. There must be adequate provision for the transmission of
text, graphics, or writings referenced or generated during the examination
(e.g., slides, whiteboard). The use of audio-only communications is not
permitted.

In case of technical difficulties or technology failure, the committee
will decide whether to continue the examination once the difficulty is
resolved, or to cancel the examination and reschedule it for a later date, without prejudice to the student.

If the student or any committee member(s) have a disability that will be impacted by virtual participation, reasonable accommodations should be provided.

Attendance Requirements: campus-based programs

Programs should ensure that students are advised about virtual participation guidelines related to an oral examination, including reference to these guidelines as well as any other program-specific requirements.

It is generally expected that members of a graduate student's committee will be physically present with the student for each oral committee examination. However, an oral examination may have virtually participating committee members according to the following rules:

- **Any one member** of the graduate student's committee (excluding the chair / advisor) can participate at a distance without seeking further authorization.
- The **committee chair** will be allowed to participate at a distance only if rescheduling the oral examination for a time when they are on campus would cause hardship to the student. In this case, the committee chair should submit a petition to the Dean of the Graduate School, outlining the reasons leading to the request.
- Similarly, a petition from the committee chair to the Dean of the Graduate School is also required if **more than one committee member** is to participate at a distance. Such petitions will only be considered if rescheduling the oral examination to a time when only one member of the committee would be participating at a distance would cause significant hardship to the student, as outlined in the petition.

All committee members participating virtually must be able to **fully interact** in the oral examination via audio and video capability; participation by viewing a recording of the oral examination is specifically prohibited. All members of the committee, on- or off-site, must participate in the evaluation of the examination; provisions must be made to record their vote and collect their signatures as necessary.

**Student participation at a distance** in graduate oral examinations involving their committee is generally not allowed for campus-based graduate programs. However, the committee chair and/or the graduate program director, in agreement with the student, may draft a petition to seek permission from the Dean of the Graduate School to conduct such an oral examination. This arrangement will only be considered if the committee chair agrees to it, and if rescheduling the oral examination for a time when the student is on campus would cause great hardship to the student; the petition should clearly outline the extenuating circumstances leading to this need.

Attendance Requirements: online or hybrid programs

An online graduate program is defined as a program in which no aspect of the degree program occurs on-campus, including oral examinations. A hybrid program is defined as a program which has both online and on-campus elements.

For online and hybrid programs that handle oral examinations in an online setting, all committee members as well as the student may participate virtually in the oral examination. However, these programs must fully adhere to the guidelines outlined in the Technical Requirements section above for any oral examination involving the entire committee.

Hybrid programs that require oral examinations to take place on campus must adhere to the guidelines set forth for campus-based programs.

---

**Article Style vs. Journal Format**

**Article Style.**

At the doctoral level, "article-style dissertations" are unified works that include several distinct but related studies of research or creative activity, each of which is of publishable quality. The University does not permit an "article-style thesis" to be presented for a master's degree.

**Journal Format.**

A "journal-format thesis" is acceptable. Such a thesis follows the format of a particular journal in which the student and advisor want the thesis to be published. To prepare a journal-format thesis, the student uses the journal's "information for authors" or similarly titled guidelines in conjunction with the Graduate School's Student Guide to Preparing Electronic Theses and Dissertations.

All theses are submitted electronically rather than on paper. See the Graduate School's homepage for a link to information on Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD) for details.

Theses must comply with the regulations set out in A Student Guide to Preparing Electronic Theses and Dissertations, available on the Graduate School’s website. Approval of the thesis by the graduate dean is necessary before graduation.

The thesis should be completed, if possible, while the student is in residence at the University. To request permission to complete a thesis in absentia, the student must, before leaving the University, submit a satisfactory outline of the thesis, as well as evidence that adequate facilities are available where the work will be done, to the head of the student’s major department.

**Protection of Human Subjects for Research**

Scientific research involving human subjects has produced substantial benefits for society, but it also can pose troubling ethical questions. The mission of the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Protection of Human Subjects is to ensure that research involving human subjects is conducted ethically. University and federal policies require that review and approval to use human subjects in research precede the research. In the case of research that involves the use of human subjects in any way, the principal investigator is responsible for contacting the college Human Research Review Committee to obtain approval for the planned research.

**Final Thesis Defense**

The final oral thesis defense is the culminating experience in the master's program. As such, all members of the thesis committee are expected to attend and participate in real time. Virtual attendance via interactive video or teleconference is permitted for off-campus external committee members, but Tuscaloosa campus faculty should attend in person unless extraordinary circumstances dictate the need for virtual attendance. The thesis must comply with the regulations in A Student Guide to Preparing Electronic Theses and Dissertations.

"Completed" means submitted to ProQuest after being successfully defended, carefully edited following the defense meeting, and having the Committee Acceptance Form (CAF) signed by all committee members, department chairperson, and graduate dean. A majority of the thesis committee must approve the written thesis and defense before submission to the Graduate School. Following the thesis defense, the Committee Acceptance Form is submitted by the thesis chair through the UA DocuSign system in myBama.

Graduate School deadlines, including each semester’s thesis deadline, are available at the Graduate School’s homepage. Consult the ETD website for details of ETD submission, including information on what
needs to be submitted to the Graduate School. The graduate dean must approve the thesis before the student can be cleared for graduation.

Comprehensive Examinations
In addition to the regular course examinations, a final comprehensive examination representing a "culminating" or "capstone" experience for a degree is required of all candidates for the master's degree (except for those candidates pursuing the Master of Accountancy, the Master of Business Administration, the Master of Library and Information Studies, the Master of Social Work, and the Master of Tax Accounting). The comprehensive examination is a culminating experience in which the student is expected to integrate prior learning. Each department, with approval of the Graduate Council, determines the most appropriate format. The various exams may consist of one or more of the following:

- a written and/or oral examination based on the content of the degree program;
- a thesis and final oral defense;
- a course requiring interpretation and integration of information from previous courses;
- a research paper, a "policy and practice" paper, or equivalent experience;
- a public performance or exhibition along with a contextualizing paper; and/or
- a practicum or internship.

If the comprehensive exam requirement is met with option 1 and/or 2 above, then the examining committee for comprehensive examinations must consist of at least three members of the graduate faculty from that department and appointed by the dean of the Graduate School. The examination must be given at least six weeks before the date of graduation (two weeks before for Plan II) and reported promptly to the dean of the Graduate School on appropriate forms. The final report is submitted by the department through the UA DocuSign system in myBama. The form should be submitted when all examinations are completed. A student may take the final oral or written examination only twice. Failing the examination twice results in dismissal from the degree program and the Graduate School.

Application for Graduation
Each candidate for a master's degree must submit an Application for Degree via myBama no later than the last day to register or add a course for the semester (or first term of the summer semester) in which requirements for the degree are to be completed. That specific date is published each semester at the Graduate School's website under Current Students/Deadlines for Graduate Students.

Second Master's Degree
Six (6) semester hours of eligible credit from one master's degree at The University of Alabama may be applied to the requirements for a second master's degree, but only if the department of the second master's agrees to the courses in the plan of study. Any hours from the previous master's degree must have been earned during the six years (18 fall, spring, and summer semesters) immediately preceding the date on which the second degree is to be awarded. ***Please note that if a student double counts six hours between two master's degrees, no hours may double count toward any additional master's degrees.