

CLAYTON STATE UNIVERSITY-GRADUATE SCHOOL PREPARING A DEGREE PLAN FOR MASTER'S DEGREES

Every master's student must file a Degree Plan (Program of Study – POS) with the School of Graduate Studies. This program is a formal list of courses the student intends to complete to fulfill the requirements for the degree and should consist solely of courses directly related to the master's degree. A student should prepare the Program of Study in consultation with their advisor. The program must be signed by the student, and approved by the advisor and department chair or graduate program director. It is then submitted to the School of Graduate Studies for final approval. The Program of Study should be filed with the School of Graduate Studies by the end of the first semester of study for Full-time graduate students or by the end of the second semester of study for Part-time graduate students. **Students must file their Final Program of Study with the School of Graduate Studies not later than the end of the semester prior to the expected graduation term.**

These guidelines should be followed when preparing a Program of Study:

- The number of credits required for the master's degree varies depending upon the degree program. Please note: the time limit for completion of the degree is seven (7) years. Credits earned more than seven years prior to the semester in which the degree is to be awarded MAY NOT count toward degree requirements.
- Consult with your advisor, major professor or thesis/project chair. The Official Master's Program of Study Form can be downloaded from the School of Graduate Studies website. The Official Master's Program of Study Form is available in WORD or PDF format that will permit you to print and complete the form.
- Print the file after completing the form, sign and forward to your advisor for his/her signature. The Program of Study must have all required signatures before being submitted to the School of Graduate Studies. NOTE: the minimum number of credit hours required to complete degree requirements vary depending on the program.
- Quarter hour course credits must be converted to the semester hour equivalent. To convert a quarter hour course to semester hours, multiply the number of quarter hours by 0.66. Example: (5 quarter hours *0.66 = 3.3 semester hours).
- A Final Program of Study, with the required signatures, must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies for final review and approval not later than the end of the semester prior to the term in which graduation is planned.
- Course prefix codes, course numbers, course titles, credit hours and semesters taken must be listed on the program as they are recorded on the transcripts. Students should secure copies of transcripts to be sure that information recorded on the Program of Study is accurate. Internship, practicum, project or thesis hours must be listed on the program. (Note carefully the minimum number of internship, practicum, project or thesis hours required for your degree program).
- Credits earned more than seven (7) years prior to the degree completion semester or projected degree completion semester may not be included on the Program of Study.
- At least 50% of the degree program credit hours must be in courses restricted to graduate students.
- Undergraduate credits are not counted toward a graduate degree.
- Not more than six (6) credit hours of independent study may be included on the program.
- No hours of credit taken under non-degree admission may count toward degree requirements.
- Courses designated as deficiencies or prerequisites at the time of admission cannot be used on a Program of Study (Refer to the admission letter sent to you by the Office of Graduate Admissions for deficiencies or prerequisites designated by the department or consult with your advisor).
- A maximum of six (6) semester hours of graduate course work from an accredited university may be included as transfer credit on the Program of Study providing the credits were earned within the seven year time limit for degree completion and providing that the institution offers the graduate degree program for which you have been admitted at Clayton State University. The School of Graduate Studies may grant exceptions to this limit when justified by inter-institutional collaboration. Transfer courses with grades below "B" are not acceptable.

If a transfer course is to be taken in the future, the semester should be noted on the Program of Study. Official transcripts that show the courses and grades for transfer credit(s) must be on file in the School of Graduate Studies. Final approval of the Program of Study cannot be determined until all transcripts are received.

- Students pursuing a second master's degree may apply up to 9 credit hours from the first master's degree to the program of the second with the advisor's approval.
- If any course work on the Program of Study that has been approved by the School of Graduate Studies is more than seven years old and a final comprehensive, exit, or terminal examination is required for the master's degree program, the examination may include material that was not covered in outdated courses.
- If changes need to be made in the Program of Study, you must submit a completed Amended Program of Study Form that is approved by your advisor. The Program of Study amendment must be approved by the School of Graduate Studies. Unless there are extensive changes, a revised Program of Study does not have to be submitted.

The University Graduate Catalog also contains information about degree requirements, Programs of Study and other requirements for graduate study at Clayton State University.

Program of Study Form

The POS is available in both Word and PDF format. Select the format you prefer to complete your POS or go to the Download Forms link in Quick Links. The POS forms are available under the Forms for Enrolled Students section of the forms page.

Avoiding Problems

When your Program of Study cannot be approved, either because it violates School of Graduate Studies guidelines or because you have not been admitted to the degree program or satisfied certain prerequisites, both you and your advisor are confronted by delays and extra work. In an effort to help you avoid such problems we have listed below some of the more common reasons Programs of Study are returned not approved.

- A course listed may not have been taken for graduate credit; a course may have a grade below "C"; a course may not meet the seven year limit.
- Credits earned under non-degree admission
- The POS fails to meet the rule that at least 50% of the POS credits must be in courses restricted to graduate students.
- The POS includes deficiency or prerequisite courses.
- The POS includes undergraduate courses.
- The POS does not meet the minimum degree program hours requirement.
- The POS was submitted for a program to which you have not been admitted.
- You may not have been admitted as a degree seeking student.
- Courses listed do not match those appearing on your transcript(s). Department codes, course numbers, titles and credit hours must appear exactly as they appear on the transcript.
- All signatures of the student, advisor, program director or department chair have not been obtained.
- The School of Graduate Studies has not received official transcripts for all transfer courses or such transcripts indicate that the courses in question do not qualify for transfer credit.
- No Application for Approval of Thesis or Project Topic and Committee Membership Form (Thesis/Project Prospectus) showing proper approval for research involving human or animal subjects, recombinant DNA or bio-hazardous materials has been submitted.