

Career, Technical and Leadership Education Graduate Program

Frequently Asked Questions about the CTLE Graduate Program

Does everyone have to have a Master's Committee?

Yes. The purpose of the Master's Committee is to provide the student with advice and consultation as you take courses and make decisions about the focus of your studies. This is why we say that you must form an interim advisory committee by the time you have completed 6 credit hours in the Master's program.

Initially, the members of the interim Master's committee should meet with you at least once a semester on an informal basis. Eventually, however, a final examination Master's Committee is recommended by the DGS using the "Final Exam Recommendation" form and is appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School. Members of your interim Master's committee may or may not be members of your final examination Master's committee.

A Master's committee consists of a minimum of three faculty members, of which...

- The chair as well as one other member is from your program area (e.g., CTE or CLD)
- At least two committee members (including the chair or co-chair) must be members of the Graduate Faculty
- At least one member of the committee must be a full member of the Graduate Faculty

What is the difference between a committee chair and advisor?

Depending on the option and emphasis, you may be assigned to or you initially select a temporary advisor to assist you in selecting course work and answering questions.

A chair is formally selected by you to help lead you through the remainder of your program by building a course of study and assisting you with your capstone (thesis, creative component, practicum, etc.). Your temporary adviser can eventually serve as your committee chair if you wish.

What are the general requirements for getting a Master's degree?

- At least **two thirds (20 hours)** of the minimum requirements for the master's degree must be in regular courses
- At least **half (15 hours)** of the minimum course requirements (excluding thesis, practicum or internship credit) must be in 600 or 700 level courses
- Candidates for the master's degree must have a major area (CTLE) and must take at least **half (15 hours)** of the course work in this core area and, **three fourths (12 hours)** must be at the 600 or 700 level

Can I transfer graduate credit hours into my program?

Yes, a **total of 9 hours or 25%** of regular course degree requirements may be transferred for a master's degree. These hours include **all post-bac** work as well as **all graduate work** taken at another university or as a student in another graduate program at UK

Transfer of credit from independent work, research, workshops, practica or thesis work is not permitted. A student must have been in graduate status at the time the courses were taken in order for the courses to be transferable.

A request to transfer credit hours into your Master's program and to be counted towards the requirements for that degree must be initiated by the DGS

What are the course requirements for completing a Master's degree?

See the attached advising sheets for MS in Career and Technical Leadership Education:

Career and Technical Education - Agricultural Education - non-thesis creative component option
Career and Technical Education - Agricultural Education - thesis option
Community and Leadership Development - non-thesis creative component option
Community and Leadership Development - thesis option

Is there a residency requirement for graduation?

The Graduate School has established no residency requirements for students obtaining a Master's degree.

Are there graduate assistantships available?

There are two graduate teaching assistantships available to students pursuing an Agricultural Education emphasis in the Career and Technical Education option and two graduate research assistantships available to students pursuing the Community and Leadership Development (CLD) option. These assistantships are associated with the Department of Community and Leadership Development.

There is one graduate teaching assistantship available to students pursuing a Family and Consumer Sciences emphasis in the Career and Technical Education option. This assistantship is associated with the Department of Family Studies.

From time to time there are additional graduate research assistantships available based upon grants and new faculty start-up packages.

What do you do if you receive a graduate assistantship?

All graduate assistants are required to work 20 hours a week in one of the following capacities:

- A graduate teaching assistantship is for 9 months and you will have responsibility for assisting faculty members in their instructional programs
- A graduate research assistantship is for 12 months and you will have responsibility for supporting faculty in carrying out their research programs

What does an assistantship cover?

All graduate assistantships pay:

- Full tuition costs for Fall and Spring semesters only.
- Student health benefit coverage.
- A stipend for 20 hours of assistantship work with a CTLE program.

How many courses can I take during a semester if I have a graduate assistantship?

A person on a graduate assistantship can take no less than 3 and no more than 12 credit hours per semester. In general, the faculty would suggest that 6 to 9 hours is a reasonable academic load for someone on a graduate assistantship.

If I receive a graduate assistantship this year, am I eligible to apply for one next year?

A student is eligible to apply for a maximum of 2 years of support through a graduate assistantship. Whether or not the student is granted the second year of assistantship support will depend on their overall performance (work + academic progress) as a graduate assistant.

This evaluation is conducted as follows:

- At the end of each academic year, the faculty member with whom you are working during your assistantship will be asked to evaluate your work performance.
- This information is added to your academic progress in order to create a comprehensive evaluation of your performance in your graduate assistantship

How do I decide between the non-thesis and thesis options?

This is a personal choice, but one that should be made in close consultation with your Master's committee and in the context of your professional goals. If you have any interest in pursuing a Ph.D. it is essential that you choose the thesis option which focuses on the development of the research skills and experience that is essential for success in a Ph.D. program.

For the CLD Option:

The non-thesis option involves 30 credit hours which includes the 3 credit hour "Practicum in CLD" (CLD 750) course. In this course you will design and implement an applied project that addresses an organizational or situational concern from an interdisciplinary perspective.

The thesis option involves 30 credit hours which includes 1-6 credit hours in "Master's Thesis Research" (CLD 748) course. This course provides you academic credit for the time you commit to completing the research and the interpretive writing that serves as the basis for your thesis.

For the CTE Option:

The non-thesis option involves 30 credit hours which includes the 2-6 credit hour "Creative Component" (using AED/FCS 789 – "Independent Study") course. Students select a creative component topic or project. Action research projects would be appropriate for creative component work. Once completed, the committee approves the project for presentation and the creative component is presented at an open session.

The thesis option involves 30 credit hours which includes 6 credit hours in "Master's Thesis Research" (AED/FCS 748) course. This course provides you academic credit for the time you commit to completing the research and the interpretive writing that serves as the basis for your thesis.

What is the difference between a non-thesis creative project and a thesis?

For the CLD Option:

The non-thesis creative project is designed to engage you in an aspect of "hands-on" community development work. While you might do some research for this project, the focus is on demonstrating your ability to apply the knowledge and skills you have learned within the context of a community, organization or, policy process. You will complete a written product (generally between 30-50 pages) that is representative of a technical report. Furthermore, you will present your project with appropriate written and visual supporting materials to a departmental seminar.

There are many choices in the focus or topic for your non-thesis creative project. Some examples of topics for a creative non-thesis project are:

- Design and conduct a program evaluation for an organization
- Conduct a needs assessment for a community or an organization
- Develop an assets inventory for a community or an organization
- Evaluate the impact of a public or organizational policy
- Evaluate the use of different sources of communication in agriculture or natural resources
- Design a marketing campaign – both process and supporting materials – for a community or organizations

The thesis is designed to engage you in the research process from conceptualization of a problem statement to operationalization of variables to collection and analysis of data to summary of findings and recommendations for future research. It is the preparation for the writing of a Ph.D. dissertation. A Master's thesis reflects a high standard of expository writing. A Master's thesis will always include:

- A thorough review of the peer-reviewed literature related to the research problem
- The development of a theoretically-grounded conceptual framework that situates the research problem within the social sciences and provides a framework for interpreting your results
- A methodology for data-gathering that produces valid and reliable measures
- Analysis of the data
- Summary and recommendations

For the CTE option:

The non-thesis option is for students wishing to complete a practitioners-based scholarly project. With the guidance and approval of their adviser, students select a creative component topic or project. Action research projects would be appropriate for creative component work, but the project is not limited to action research. Projects should encompass skills and dispositions learned from most, if not all, graduate coursework. Projects cannot be tasks that are part of the day-to-day operations of the student's job or position; however, projects can be (and are encouraged to be) supplemental to the day-to-day operations of the student's job that will enhance the program and/or classroom.

The thesis is designed to engage you in the research process from conceptualization of a problem statement to operationalization of variables to collection and analysis of data to summary of findings and recommendations for practice and future research. It is the preparation for the writing of a Ph.D. dissertation. A Master's thesis reflects a high standard of expository writing. A thesis will always include:

- A thorough review of the peer-reviewed literature related to the research problem
- The development of a theoretically-grounded conceptual framework that situates the research problem within education and provides a framework for interpreting your results
- A methodology for data-gathering that produces valid and reliable measures
- Analysis of the data
- Conclusions, Implications and Recommendations

Is there an oral or written exam for a Master's degree?

For the CLD option

For the non-thesis creative project option, your seminar presentation to the department will be followed by a closed-door meeting with your Master's Committee at which time any additional questions may be posed by your committee. Together these constitute the final oral exam for your Master's degree.

For the thesis option, an oral exam is scheduled when you complete your thesis. The oral exam will include:

- An open seminar wherein you will present your research-based findings to the department

- A closed session with the members of your Master's committee to orally defend your thesis

For the CTE option:

For the non-thesis creative project option, your seminar presentation to the department will be followed by a closed-door meeting with your Master's Committee at which time any additional questions may be posed by your committee. Together these constitute the final oral exam for your Master's degree.

For the thesis option, an oral exam is scheduled when you complete your thesis. The oral exam will include both an open session where you will present an overview of the research, findings and conclusions and a closed session with the members of your Master's committee to complete the oral defense of your thesis.

What are the steps that I must complete in order to sit for my final examination for my Master's degree?

First, you need to file a degree application card with the Graduate School. To be eligible for a degree, students must file an application in the Graduate School **within 30 days after the start of the semester** (or 15 days into the second Summer Session), in which they expect to complete their work

This is accomplished by **submitting two** Application for Degree Cards, signed by the DGS.

Application-for-degree cards are **valid for one calendar year**.

They are available in the Graduate School Main Office (351 Patterson Office Tower) in hard copy form, and on the Graduate School web site in printable format.

Second, you need to have the DGS recommend the members of the formal Master's committee by using the "Final Exam Recommendation" form. Ultimately, the members of your Master's committee are appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Third, you have to meet all the Graduate School requirements to sit for a Master's exam. These include:

Master's students will be eligible to sit for the Final Examination only if they have completed **all** coursework requirements for the degree, or if the remaining course work is *in progress* at the time of the examination.

Students with "I" grades or "S" grades in credit-bearing courses are **not** eligible to sit for the final examination **even if** that class is not required for the degree

The overall graduate GPA of the student must be 3.0 or better to sit for the examination.

Fourth, you need to schedule your final exam for the Master's degree. This must be completed no later than 8 days before the last day of classes (e.g., if the last day of classes is Friday Dec 9, so the last day to sit for a Master's final exam is Th Dec 1).

To schedule your final examination, you must submit to the Graduate School a "Final Exam Recommendation" form **two weeks** before you actually will sit for the final exam. For the purposes of the CLD non-thesis option, the final exam is the seminar presentation. For the purposes of the CLD thesis option, the final exam is the seminar and the closed-door oral exam with your committee.

The final exam **must be conducted no later than eight days before the last day of classes** for the

degree to be awarded at the end of that term (see the University Calendar or the Graduate School Bulletin for exact dates).

If the student is writing a thesis, a signed "Thesis Approval Sheet" must accompany the request to schedule the final exam.

After successful completion of the Final Examination, the student has 60 days to submit a final copy of the thesis to the Graduate School; otherwise, a second Final Examination may be required.

Is there a time limit for completing the Master's Degree?

Activities which are used to satisfy master's degree requirements must be completed within eight years preceding the proposed date of graduation.

Extensions of time will be considered by the Dean of the Graduate School and the Graduate Council only upon written recommendation by the appropriate Director of Graduate Studies.

Extensions up to 10 years (total) may be approved directly by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Extensions up to 12 years must be approved by the Graduate Council. No activity completed more than 12 calendar years preceding the proposed graduation date will be considered for graduation.

(Note that a DGS requesting "Transfer of Credits" that are more than 8 years old must request an extension of time upon submission of the "Transfer of Credit" Form)