

Graduate Program Learning Outcomes: General statement in the Graduate Catalog, page 4.

History • The University of Mississippi from 1848, the date of its formal opening, until 1870 conferred the honorary degree of Master of Arts upon certain of its graduates who had attained intellectual distinction. Courses at the graduate level were offered first in 1870. A comprehensive examination as a requirement for the master's degree also was established that year. A definite program of graduate study with a minimum residence requirement of one academic year was inaugurated in 1890. During the last nine decades, graduate work at The University of Mississippi has been continually developed and expanded. The Graduate School was formally organized in 1927 to coordinate and administer graduate study and research at the university.

Aims and Ends of Graduate Education • The purpose of graduate education at the university was first articulated by the Aims and Ends statement associated with the organization of the Graduate School in 1927. The statement is as follows:

The student who undertakes graduate study should understand at the outset that work of this character implies more than the acquisition of knowledge under competent instruction. He or she should aspire to a degree of knowledge of a given subject in order to make a contribution that is of original and independent value. This does not imply that much of the student's energies are not still to be applied in the acquisition of facts universally accepted, a process that should continue through life, but in graduate study these facts are to be weighed, coordinated, and supplemented by the student's own contributions.

Graduate Education Learning Outcomes • The Graduate School of The University of Mississippi has master's, specialist, and doctoral degree programs. The general learning outcomes of these degrees are summarized as follows.

A student who completes a **master's degree** should

- demonstrate a mastery of a body of knowledge in the discipline; the level of the material and/or the extent of mastery must be above that for the baccalaureate degree;
- successfully use the basic methodologies of the discipline;
- retrieve, evaluate, and utilize information relevant to the discipline;
- communicate, both orally and in writing, in a manner and level of proficiency that is standard for the discipline;
- (for thesis master's) conduct research or produce creative work;
- (for nonthesis master's) function as a professional in the discipline.

A student who completes a **specialist degree** should be able to demonstrate the above competencies and should

- master a body of knowledge beyond that for a master's degree;
- function as a professional in the discipline.

A student who completes a **doctoral degree** should

- demonstrate broad and advanced knowledge within the discipline;
- successfully use a range of methodologies of the discipline;
- independently perform original research;
- communicate effectively;
- function as a professional in the discipline.