



Non-Thesis Instruction Packet

Revised 2023

The University of Oklahoma || *Graduate College*

Dear Master's Degree Student,

Congratulations on your accomplishment so far!

This instruction packet is intended to assist you in completing each step of your master's degree program. Please read it thoroughly and if you have any questions, contact your Graduate Degree Management Specialist (GDMS) in the Graduate College.

CONTACT INFO *The University of Oklahoma Graduate College*

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Address: 731 Elm Avenue, Room 213 || Norman, OK 73019-2115

Phone: (405) 325-3811

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*Scan me to find information
about graduation*

✓ Checklist *for* Degree Completion

Step 1: *Program of Study*

During your first semester of graduate study, consult the academic unit to select, or be assigned, an advisor. Confer with your academic unit to discuss departmental procedures for planning your *Program of Study* and forming a committee. Check the master's degree requirements for your academic unit and review the [Graduate College Bulletin](#) for enrollment standards.

File for candidacy by completing and submitting the [Program of Study form](#) to the Graduate College. This form is due no later than one semester before you intend to graduate in accordance with the deadlines listed below.

If you intend to graduate in...	Submit your form no later than:
Summer	1st Monday in March
Fall	1st Monday in April
Spring	1st Monday in October

Your graduate program may set an earlier deadline. Students eligible to receive VA educational benefits will need to submit this form before coursework can be certified as eligible for coverage.

Step 2: *Preparing to Graduate*

If there are any changes to the coursework listed on your approved *Program of Study* form, contact your academic unit promptly and submit a new form. Changes must be endorsed by your graduate liaison and submitted in writing to the Graduate College. Your graduation could be delayed if the Graduate College is not notified of changes to your Program of Study. Apply for graduation online no later than the deadline indicated on the official [Academic Calendar](#). Apply on one.ou.edu in the academic tab under "Apply for graduation." See the [OU Commencement website](#) for information about attending college convocation ceremonies and May Commencement.

The online graduation application ensures you receive your diploma and is a requirement for all graduate degrees. If you fail to apply for graduation, conferral of your degree will be delayed until the semester you do apply for graduation. A student may not graduate until all degree requirements are completed, including the application for graduation.

If you do not apply for graduation by the appropriate deadline, your name may not appear in the commencement booklet at graduation. If you experience any difficulties completing the online graduation application, please contact the Office of Records (405) 325-2017 or records@ou.edu.

Step 3: *Schedule Your Non-Thesis (Comprehensive) Exam*

Students pursuing coursework-only non-thesis master's degrees which do not require a non-thesis examination are not required to complete steps 3 through 5 of this packet. A majority of OU non-thesis master's degree programs require a culminating non-thesis examination.

Work completed for the non-thesis examination should be the result of your individual effort. All graduate students should be familiar with [A Student's Guide to Academic Integrity](#) at the University of Oklahoma.

The *Program of Study* form must be up to date. Because the non-thesis examination is comprehensive, you should complete all required or core courses and at least 75 percent of all coursework listed on your approved *Program of Study* before taking the exam. A student who has not completed this coursework as recommended is not normally granted authority to take the exam. A student cannot appeal an unsatisfactory result of the exam on the basis that they had not completed this coursework.

You will need to work with your academic unit to select an examination date. The non-thesis examination should be held on or before the deadline indicated on the [Academic Calendar](#). The exam may not be held during the period of final course examinations, nor may it be held while the university is not in session.

Step 4: *Obtain Authority for Exam*

Please see the [Graduate College Bulletin](#) for complete information regarding the non-thesis exam.

Contact your academic unit so that they may request the authority form for your non-thesis exam from the Graduate College. The Graduate College will review your status to determine your eligibility for the non-thesis exam:

- 1) Your *Program of Study* must be approved by the Graduate College and must be fully up to date. Any changes to this form must be approved by the Graduate College before your exam can be authorized.
- 2) You need to be enrolled in at least two (2) hours of graduate-level coursework for the semester in which you intend to take the non-thesis exam.
- 3) Your committee must meet the non-thesis examination committee selection criteria outlined in the *Graduate College Bulletin*.

If all of the above criteria have been met, then the Graduate College will email *the Authority Report Form for the Non-Thesis Exam* to your graduate liaison and your examining committee. Once released, the authority form is only valid for one semester. **You should not take the exam until you have verified with the committee that they have received the proper authority.**

Step 5: *Return Authority Form to Graduate College*

The *Authority Report Form for the Non-Thesis Exam* is used to report the results of the non-thesis exam to the Graduate College.

A unanimous report from the committee is expected. If the committee does not reach a unanimous, satisfactory decision:

- The committee member(s) who dissent from the majority opinion should not sign the authority report form, but should instead attach a memo explaining the rationale for the dissent.
- If the committee consists of three members and one committee member dissents, the dissent is recognized as a minority report.
- If the committee consists of more than three members and two dissent, then the dean of the Graduate College will investigate and make a final decision.
- If more than two committee members vote “unsatisfactory,” the examination will be judged unsatisfactory.

Deadlines for Completion

Review the University [Academic Calendar](#) and Graduate College’s [Steps to Degree](#) webpage for information on deadlines for specific degree and course completion requirements. Please note that individual academic units may require forms to be filed earlier than the dates shown.

If you have questions, please contact the Graduate College at (405) 325-3811, or through e-mail at gradinfo@ou.edu.

Other Important Information

Proof of Graduation, Transcripts, & Diplomas

- The Office of Academic Records posts conferred degrees to the official transcript six weeks after the close of each term.
- If you need proof of graduation before the degree has posted to your official transcript, you may submit a [Request for Letter of Completion](#) to the Graduate College. The *Letter of Completion* is an official University of Oklahoma document bearing the University seal and can be used as proof of graduation for purposes of potential employment, updating current personnel records, etc.
 - The Graduate College cannot authorize a [Letter of Completion](#) until all final term grades have posted to your transcript.
 - Once the Graduate College has confirmed that you have met all degree requirements, the Office of Academic Records will mail the letter(s) you have requested, provided you have resolved all tuition and fee payments.
- The Office of Academic Records mails diplomas to graduates 120 days after the close of the term.
- If you owe tuition or fees, you will be cleared for graduation, but you will not receive proof of graduation until all such payments have been resolved through the [Office of the Bursar](#).

Commencement Ceremony

- The [OU Graduation Commencement Ceremony](#) is held once a year in the spring. All summer graduates, fall graduates and spring graduation candidates are invited to participate in this commencement ceremony.
- To purchase a cap and gown for the ceremonies, please contact the [University Bookstore](#) at (405) 325-3511, attend one of the [Graduation Gear-Up](#) events held each fall and spring on the Norman campus and each spring on the Tulsa campus, or order online.
- For additional information about Commencement, College Convocations, receptions, and other celebratory events, please visit [the University Events website](#).