

# About Graduate Studies

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## Mission Statement

St. Mary's University, as a Catholic Marianist University, fosters the formation of people in faith and educates leaders for the common good through community, integrated liberal arts and professional education, and academic excellence.

Our mission statement is a reflection of the Characteristics of Marianist Universities. There are five elements that characterize the Marianist approach to education: educate for formation in faith, provide an integral quality education, educate in the family spirit, educate for service, justice and peace, and educate for adaptation and change. The three Marianist universities have published a book called Characteristics of Marianist Universities (<https://cloud.3dissue.net/5656/5635/6316/21815/>) to fully describe the Marianist approach to education at the university level.

Graduate education is especially crucial to our society because it is at the pinnacle of all education, cultural, economic and political development. Graduate education influences the world in far reaching ways due to the basic research conducted by its faculty and students. The quality of our civilization and its continuity, and the witness of the Catholic Marianist tradition, depends upon its highest intellectual achievements gained through graduate education. At St. Mary's we ensure that graduate education is strong, vibrant, and healthy – capable of discharging its mission of intellectual development and leadership.

As the Graduate School of a Catholic Marianist university, this school strives to integrate a rigorous intellectual experience, a zeal for the search for knowledge and truth, and a commitment to leadership and service.

## Academic Accreditation

St. Mary's University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) to award B.A., B.B.A., B.S., L.L.M., M.A., M.B.A., M.Jur., M.P.A., M.S., J.D., and Ph.D. Degree-granting institutions also may offer credentials such as certificates and diplomas at approved degree levels. Questions about the accreditation of St. Mary's University may be directed in writing to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097, by calling 404-679-4500, or by using information available on SACSCOC's website.

## Specialized Accreditation

### Business Administration

Greehey School of Business: AACSB International – Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business.

Master of Business Administration (MBA): AACSB – International Association of Management Education

### Counseling

Clinical Mental Health Counseling (M.A.): CACREP – Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs

Marriage and Family Therapy (M.A.): COAMFTE – Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education

Counselor Education and Supervision (Ph.D.): CACREP – Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs

Marriage and Family Therapy (Ph.D.): COAMFTE – Commission on Accreditation for Marriage and Family Therapy Education

### Education

Catholic School Leadership (M.A.): Approved by The Texas State Board for Educator Certification

Education (M.A.): Approved by The Texas State Board for Educator Certification

Educational Leadership (M.A.): Approved by The Texas State Board for Educator Certification

Reading (M.A.): Approved by The Texas State Board for Educator Certification

Teacher Education Program: Approved by the Texas State Board for Educator Certification

### Engineering

The Bachelor of Science degree program in Computer Engineering is accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET, <http://www.abet.org> (<http://www.abet.org>)

The Bachelor of Science degree program in Electrical Engineering is accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET, <http://www.abet.org> (<http://www.abet.org>)

The Bachelor of Science degree program in Industrial Engineering is accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET, <http://www.abet.org> (<http://www.abet.org>)

The Bachelor of Science degree program in Mechanical Engineering is accredited by the Engineering Accreditation Commission of ABET, <http://www.abet.org> (<http://www.abet.org>)

## Law

Juris Doctorate (J.D.): Approved by The American Bar Association

## Music

B.A. Degree: Accredited by the National Association of Schools of Music NASM, <https://nasm.arts-accredit.org>

B.A. Degree with Teacher Certification: Accredited by the National Association of Music NASM, <https://nasm.arts-accredit.org>

## Institutional Memberships

The American Association of Higher Education  
The American Association of University Women  
The American Council on Education  
The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education  
The American Bar Association  
The American Schools of Oriental Research  
The Association of American Colleges and Universities  
The Association of American Law Schools  
The Association of Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities  
The Association of Texas Colleges and Universities  
The Association of Texas Graduate Schools  
The Conference of Southern Graduate Schools  
The Council of Colleges of Arts and Sciences  
The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities  
The International Association of Counseling Services  
The Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas  
The National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities  
The National Catholic Educational Association  
The Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities  
The National Collegiate Honors Council  
The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools  
The Texas Humanities Alliance  
Council of Undergraduate Research

In Compliance with Title IX, St. Mary's University does not discriminate on the basis of sex in the education programs or activities it operates. Question regarding Title IX may be referred to the St. Mary's University Title IX Officer or to the Office of Civil Rights.

## GRADUATE EDUCATION

### Definition

The words graduate and undergraduate are universal terms that are not always well defined. The aim of undergraduate instruction is to give the student knowledge of the history, tradition, and values of a particular society. The intent is to make the recipient a literate and articulate participant in the life of the nation and the world. Included in such instruction are the basic skills of communication and computation by which one functions effectively as an educated and responsible citizen and steward of the nation as well as of the world.

Graduate education is at a level of complexity and generalization that extends the knowledge and intellectual maturity of the student. Graduate study requires students to analyze, explore, question, reconsider, and synthesize old and new knowledge and skills. It affords a greater depth, intensity, specialized skills, and sense of creative independence that allows the graduate to practice in and contribute to a profession or field of scholarship.

Admission to graduate programs is more selective, class size is smaller, and the lecture is often replaced by seminar and laboratory. The learning experience is more self-directed and interactive between faculty and students, and among the students themselves. Faculty members are often more experienced and more highly specialized.

Master's degree programs provide an understanding of the subject matter, bibliography, and theory and methodology of the field. They also provide an understanding of research and the manner in which research is conducted. A non-research-oriented professional master's degree requires an

understanding of the accepted professional practices in the field. Finally, master's programs provide a means for the candidates to demonstrate the knowledge and skills acquired.

A doctoral degree program, in addition to the skills of a master's candidate, provides a period of residency, substantial mastery of the subject matter, theory, bibliography, research and methodology of a significant part of the field. A dissertation evidences competence in the special language, other and independent research skills competence in pursuit of the doctoral degree. The dissertation must augment or reinterpret the knowledge of the field. Finally, the doctoral program provides a means for the candidate to demonstrate the knowledge and skills acquired.

## Goals and Objectives

Students completing a graduate degree at St. Mary's University will have achieved the following goals and objectives:

1. Graduates will have completed courses characterized by advanced disciplinary content and intellectual rigor.
2. Graduates will demonstrate currency in the discipline.
3. Graduates will be able to demonstrate mastery of specified knowledge and skills that includes an integration of knowledge and disciplinary specialization.
4. Graduates will comprehend the discipline and understand research that aids in actual practice of the education acquired.
5. Graduates will understand how knowledge is created and how to experiment and discover new knowledge.
6. Graduates will demonstrate mastery of how to think, act, and perform independently in their discipline.
7. Graduates will have acquired a broad, coherent, academic experience.
8. Graduates will be able to apply knowledge learned in course work.
9. Graduates will be able to demonstrate mastery of communication skills in a manner appropriate to their degree and discipline.
10. Graduates will be able to execute practices and skills associated with their degree.
11. Graduates will be able to demonstrate breadth of knowledge in the discipline, depth in specific areas, and the ability to integrate what has been learned.

## Standards of Excellence

The following criteria are considered standards of excellence which are adhered to by graduate programs at St. Mary's University:

1. Admission - Acceptance is limited to those with high promise for success in graduate study to ensure a high quality-learning environment.
2. Level of Sophistication - Graduate courses are characterized by advanced disciplinary content and intellectual rigor. An appropriate number of graduate courses are offered to provide a balanced program. Students are required to have a significant percentage of graduate-level (distinct from combined undergraduate and graduate) courses in their degree programs.
3. Continuity/Intensity - Graduate courses are offered frequently enough to allow students to proceed through their programs in a timely and efficient manner. The program has a critical mass of students enrolled, so that they are part of a coherent group of peers. Time limits are necessary for continuity of the graduate experience and to ensure that the student is current in the discipline when the degree is awarded.
4. Core of Planned Course work - In a graduate program there is a core of planned course work appropriate to the major, as opposed to a mere collection of courses and credits. The program is coherent, to assure mastery of specified knowledge and skills through interrelated courses. The course work fosters an integration of knowledge as well as disciplinary specialization.
5. Tool/Technique/Methodology Requirements - Components which enable students to acquire tools, techniques, or methodologies for the discipline are an important part of the program. These include statistics, computer technology, research methodology, and, in some instances, foreign languages. Their function is to help the student comprehend the discipline, understand research, and aid in actual practice of the education acquired.
6. Research Component - Research is fundamental to graduate study. Students learn how new knowledge is created, how experimentation and discovery are carried out, and how to think, act, and perform independently in the discipline. Depending upon the program's applied orientation, the student can demonstrate mastery through research papers, literature reviews, artistic performance, oral and written presentations, or case studies.
7. Extra-Disciplinary Experience - Some academic exposure outside of the immediate major or discipline is common. This is necessary when a single discipline does not convey all of the knowledge and experience an individual student may need from a Master's degree program. Accordingly, students may be given an opportunity to broaden the academic experience in a coherent way, through related course work outside the major and through other experiences such as internship or practica.
8. Application of Knowledge - A graduate program requires the student to develop and demonstrate the ability to apply knowledge learned in course work. This is accomplished through examinations, field problems, theses, papers in lieu of theses, practica, internships or assistantships. An evaluation of the student's performance in these areas is a part of the student's permanent record.
9. Communication Skills - Students demonstrate mastery of verbal and written communication in a manner appropriate to the degree and discipline. Such skills may be gained through study of specific concepts and methodology, written assignments, oral reports, and examinations. These skills are evaluated in the culminating experience.
10. Culminating Experience - A capstone or integrating activity, such as an advanced seminar, thesis, recital, exhibit, practicum, or internship provides a culminating experience. This allows students to demonstrate the writing, organizational, and applied performance skills associated with the particular degree. It also provides a record of the student's achievement, which can be consulted for references and program evaluation.

11. Comprehensive Examination - The graduate degree includes a comprehensive examination at the end of all course work for the degree. Students are required to demonstrate breadth of knowledge in the discipline, depth in specific areas, and the ability to integrate what has been learned. The examination is conducted in written and/or oral form.