

Graduation

Application for Degree

Students should complete an Application for Graduation online via Gateway, when registering for their final semester. The application is due the semester prior to graduation.

Candidacy

Students who expect to earn a degree must be admitted to candidacy for the degree. To qualify, students must have (1) completed 12 graduate hours, (2) maintained a B average in all course work, (3) acceptable GRE, GMAT, LSAT or MAT scores on file in the Graduate Office, (4) satisfied specific program requirements.

Once students have met all requirements, notification will be sent to the student and program director from the Office of the Registrar.

Commencement Participation Policy

St. Mary's University's commencement ceremonies, held each fall and spring semester, are intended to recognize students who will complete all graduation requirements by the end of that semester. In some cases, students will be allowed to participate ("walk") in commencement although they will not complete all graduation requirements in that semester.

Graduate Students are eligible to participate in Commencement for the semester in which they apply for subject to the following conditions:

1. Complete all degree requirements by/in the same semester they apply to graduate, or
2. Complete all degree requirements within the next adjoining semester with no more than one academic requirement remaining.

Doctoral candidates are eligible to participate in Commencement for the semester in which they apply for subject to the following conditions:

1. Complete all degree requirements by/in the same semester they apply to graduate.

Examples of one academic requirement include one course, an internship, or any other singular requirement as approved by the Academic Dean. A student with two classes to be taken over the summer would not be eligible to participate in spring commencement. Or a student with an internship or project and a course to complete in the upcoming fall semester would not be eligible to participate in the previous spring commencement.

If a student is unable to attend the appropriate commencement, a request to participate in the immediate subsequent ceremony may be granted on a case by case basis. Students wishing to attend a subsequent commencement ceremony must provide documentation supporting that request to the Dean of Students. If approved, students are eligible to participate only in the immediately subsequent commencement ceremony. The desire to participate in the immediate subsequent commencement must be communicated to the Office of the Registrar no later than January 31 for Spring commencement and August 31 for Fall commencement.

Conferring of Degrees

Degrees are conferred during the University Commencement at the end of the Spring and Fall Semesters. Students who have completed all degree requirements at the close of the Summer term receive their diplomas by mail as soon as practical thereafter. Students graduating in the Summer also are invited to participate in December commencement.

A student on suspension may not graduate.

Distinguished Graduates

Students with an exemplary record of scholarship in earning the graduate degree are designated as distinguished graduates. Distinguished graduates are students who:

1. graduate with a cumulative G.P.A. of 3.9 or higher; and
2. have not received a grade of U or a grade below B, even if they have repeated the course with a grade of S, B, or A.

This recognition will be noted on the student's transcript and diploma after official verification of final grades. Honor's designations presented at the Commencement Ceremony will be based on the students' semester credit hours and grade point average as-of the semester prior to Commencement, which may differ from honors earned after official verification of final grades.

Residence

At least 24 hours of graduate work must be completed at St. Mary's for a 36 hour degree program and 21 for a 30 hour degree program.

Thesis

The technical and grammatical quality of a thesis is an index of the professional abilities of the author, the supervising professor, and committee members. Moreover, it is representative of the quality of graduate education of the University.

For many, the primary reason for a thesis is the research and writing experience prior to entry into a doctoral program. For some, it is a means of acquiring greater depth of knowledge in a subject of interest, or preparation for employment in a specialized field.

Although reasons for writing a thesis vary, the purpose of the research is to discover new knowledge or enhance existing knowledge in the field of interest. A project that helps solve a practical problem may also be acceptable.

Finally, the thesis is a culminating experience, which provides a record of the student's achievement in the program. This record may be consulted for reference and program evaluation.

Appendix B has more detailed instructions on thesis format and submission process.

Student Responsibilities

The thesis is not simply another research project. It should be undertaken with the knowledge that it requires a substantial investment of the student's time and monetary resources. Only students with good writing skills should undertake a thesis. While some writing skill enhancement may be expected, the thesis is not a vehicle for developing writing competency.

The student who wishes to write a thesis obtains approval from the Graduate Program Director. The student confers with the Graduate Program Director concerning the appointment of a supervising professor and other committee members. Working relationships and faculty competence in the specialty are important considerations.

Research involving human subjects must be conducted in accordance with University policy. See the manual for Policies and Procedures for Research Involving Human Subjects. A thesis based upon human subjects' research, which has not been conducted in accordance with university policy, will not be approved.

The student must submit two copies of the thesis to the Academic Dean in accordance with "Instructions for Master's Theses," April 30, 1997 or latest edition, free of punctuation, spelling, and other grammatical errors by the deadline established for graduation. The thesis grade and degree will not be approved until this requirement is satisfied. The student must register for thesis extension each semester and summer term until the thesis is approved; e.g. PS6000X. Only one registration is required during the summer, regardless of the number of summer terms offered.

Thesis Supervisor

While the student is responsible for all aspects of the thesis, the Thesis Supervisor directs the research design, data gathering, literature search, and writing of the thesis. Thesis supervision also requires a substantial amount of time for editing of grammar and style. The supervising professor will not approve the thesis until it is free of research and grammatical errors and meets the Graduate Studies standards specified in "Instructions for Master's Theses," April 30, 1997, or latest edition.

Thesis Committee

The Thesis Supervisor and a minimum of two other faculty members comprise the thesis committee. The committee members assist the Supervising Professor with suggestions concerning research design, data collection, literature search, and editing of the manuscript.

Graduate Program Directors

The Graduate Program Director approves the student's thesis enrollment, thesis topic, Supervising Professor and committee members, subject to final disposition by the Graduate Council and Dean. The Graduate Program Director ensures that the thesis meets Graduate School standards concerning quality of research and writing and that it is submitted by the date required for graduation.

Dean

The Dean may meet each semester with students electing to write a thesis, as appropriate. These meetings are attended by the Graduate Program Directors and Thesis Supervisors concerned.

The Dean establishes dates for submission of theses. Students are encouraged to submit the thesis to the Dean prior to the final due date. Dates for submission of Theses:

Semester	Deadline for Graduation
Fall	November 15
Spring	April 1
Summer	July 15

The Dean is the final approval authority for appointment of Thesis Supervisors and completion of theses. The thesis grade and degree will not be approved until the thesis meets the standards specified in Instructions for Master's Theses, St. Mary's University Graduate Studies. Although the Dean makes a final review to ensure that the thesis conforms to Graduate Studies standards, it is expected that the thesis will be error free after approval by the Thesis Supervisor.

University Librarian

The Director of the Library, or the Director's representative, ensures that the thesis meets the printing quality and paper specifications.

The library pays for binding the two copies, which are retained by the University. One copy is for use by students and is cataloged and kept in the general collections; the other copy is a permanent archival copy and is kept in the library's Special Collections.

Students may submit additional copies for binding. The library will have them bound at the student's expense. Consult the librarian for current price. Binding takes approximately four weeks.

Time Limit

All work for the Master's degree must be completed within five consecutive years from its inception. However, it is in the discretion of the Academic Dean to extend this time limitation upon written request of the student. Students are required to pass a question on the General Examination over any course completed five years before graduation. If the question is failed the course must be repeated.

Master's degree students who are registered as Summer School Students Only have seven years to complete degree requirements.

All work for the doctorate must be completed within seven consecutive years from its inception.