

Master's Degree Time Limitations

Approved by University Senate September 6, 2022

Time spent on leave of absence is counted toward the degree time limit. Students who do not graduate by this deadline will be subject to administrative disqualification by the graduate dean.

Degree Time Limitations (Advanced Certificates and Master's degrees)

For most master's and advanced certificate degrees, all requirements must be less than six years old at the time that the degree is awarded. For master's and joint master's degrees that require more than 36 units, all degree requirements must be less than seven years old when the degree is awarded. Time spent on leave of absence does not extend the degree time limit. Students who do not graduate by these deadlines may be subject to administrative disqualification by the graduate dean.

Graduate advisers who support time extensions for expiring courses may appeal on behalf of the student, if those courses have not changed significantly since the student took them. A course may not have its time limit extended if it is a transfer course from another university. An expired culminating experience (thesis, project, portfolio or comprehensive examination) may not have its time limit extended. No more than 30% of the degree's total units may be extended beyond standard time limits, and no course or other degree requirement can be greater than 10 years old at the time the degree is awarded. Individual graduate programs may more narrowly limit the number, types and/or expiration date of courses, based on field-specific standards.

Appeals for time limit extension require justification of the student's extenuating circumstances. Advisers must also address whether degree requirements have changed since the student began their program, and how each expired course will be "validated" for current knowledge. If an appeal is approved and student knowledge is then validated for recency, a one-year time limit extension will be granted. Courses that fail validation must be repeated or substituted.

Students who have lost matriculation and wish to continue their studies must formally apply for readmission, which is not guaranteed. Prior to readmission, graduate advisers should provide students with a written degree completion agreement that includes a projected graduation term. Readmitted students will be held to current degree requirements, as printed in the Catalog.