



MASTER'S DEGREES IN THE STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA

A master's degree is a postbaccalaureate academic degree awarded after one to three years of full-time academic study. The State University System of Florida offers master's degree programs in a variety of disciplines and at all universities, with the exception of New College. Students travel to Florida from throughout the world to earn their master's degrees.

Types of Master's Degrees

Master's degrees typically fall into one of three categories: research master's, professional master's, or terminal master's. Research master's degrees may be course-based, research-based, or (more typically) a mixture of the two. A thesis representing independent research may or may not be required, depending on the program. Research master's are typically the master of arts and master of science degrees in particular disciplines.

Professional master's degrees provide advanced training for future employment in a specific occupation, sometimes leading to professional licensure or certification. Typically, a capstone project is required in these programs to measure student proficiency in applying the concepts learned

Number of Master's Degree Programs Offered in the SUS	
UF	125
FSU	113
USF	92
FIU	90
UCF	72
FAU	59
FAMU	38
UNF	29
UWF	29
FGCU	22

Source: SUS Academic Degree Programs Inventory, January 2008

in the classroom. Professional master's degrees include such degrees as the master of architecture, the master of social work, the master of business administration, and the master of public administration.

Terminal master's degrees are a small subset of professional master's degrees. They typically have an expanded number of

credit hours to degree, leading to a higher level of proficiency than found in a traditional master's program. For example, the master of fine arts is a terminal degree for practitioners in the fields of visual and performing arts. Students graduating with a master of fine arts are generally considered to be prepared to teach at the university level in their field, in addition to being prepared to work as a practitioner.

The professional science master is a new type of master's degree under development across the nation. It is designed to integrate studies of natural science and mathematics with studies of management and law to better prepare students for professional positions outside academia. According to *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, many educators see the professional science master as the M.B.A. equivalent for the sciences -- a prestigious degree that can take students to the upper reaches of industry and government. Florida State University recently approved a new master's degree program, allowing students to earn a Master of Science in Computational Science or a Professional Science Master in Computational Science. The University of South Florida is also planning to offer a Professional Science Master in Bioinformatics.

Master's as a Workforce Degree

Master's degrees cater to several types of students: those seeking advanced knowledge of their field for the purposes of career advancement or personal enrichment, those seeking a mid-career change of profession, those preparing for doctoral studies, and those seeking professional licensure. The following professions require a master's degree for licensure to practice in the state of Florida: speech pathology, social work, marriage and family therapy, mental

health counseling, school psychology, and nurse practitioner.

Types of Master's Degrees Offered in the State University System of Florida

- Master of Arts
- Master of Science
- Master of Arts in Teaching
- Master of Science in Teaching
- Professional Science Master
- Discipline Specific Master's:
 - Master of Accounting
 - Master of Advertising
 - Master of Agriculture
 - Master of Architecture
 - Master of Building Construction
 - Master of Business Administration
 - Master of Computer Science
 - Master of Education
 - Master of Engineering
 - Master of Fine Arts
 - Master of Forest Resources and Conservation
 - Master of Geology
 - Master of Human Resource Management
 - Master of Health Science
 - Master of Health Administration
 - Master of Interior Design
 - Master of International Business
 - Master of Landscape Architecture
 - Master of Music
 - Master of Music Education
 - Master of Music Therapy
 - Master of Nursing
 - Master of Physical Therapy
 - Master of Public Administration
 - Master of Public Health
 - Master of Social Work
 - Master of Statistics
 - Master of Urban Regional Planning
 - Master of Women's Studies

Source: SUS Academic Degree Programs Extended Inventory

Program Areas New to the SUS Since 2001:

- Biomedical Science
- Animal Molecular and Cellular Biology
- Biostatistics
- Bioinformatics/Computational Biology
- Biotechnology
- Marine Biology
- Modeling and Simulation
- Computational Science
- Sports Business Management
- Applied Ethics
- Community Psychology
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
- Film Studies
- Digital Arts
- Art Therapy
- Bioethics/Medical Humanities
- Entrepreneurship

Program Areas Where Two or More SUS Universities Implemented Master's Degrees Since 2001:

- Environmental Science
- Creative Writing
- Criminal Justice/Forensics
- Music
- Music Business
- Public health
- Rehabilitation
- Nonprofit Management
- Finance
- Hospitality/Tourism
- Human Resource Management
- Management Information Systems

Source: SUS Academic Degree Programs Inventory, January 2008.

Florida's Agency for Workforce Innovation's (AWI) 2007 projections show a higher level of growth in employment areas that require a master's degree (2.4% on average) than those areas requiring a bachelor's degree (2.1% on average), and substantially higher growth than for occupations requiring a high school diploma (0.5% on average). AWI has projected that,

for the 2007-2015 period, the largest growth of employment opportunities for master's-trained individuals will be in the following professions: architects; medical and public health social workers; postsecondary health specialties teachers; child, family, and school social workers; and clinical, counseling, and school psychologists. In other fields, a master's degree is not required, but can make an employee more competitive and effective.

Prominence of the Master's Degree

Nationally, more than twice as many master's degrees are now awarded as compared to in the 1970s. Florida's public universities have seen a 260% increase in the number of master's degrees awarded, from 4,957 in 1980 to 12,908 in 2006. There has also been a corresponding 65% increase in master's-level degree program offerings over the past 30 years, from 431 in 1978 to 669 in 2008. Currently, the State University System offers 80 master's-level degrees entirely through distance learning. An additional 28 degrees are partially available through distance learning.

Due to the relatively low number of credit hours required for a master's degree (30-36 on average), a university seeking to introduce a new field of study or a new technology into its curriculum will often do so through the implementation of a master's degree program. Such a degree program may also lay the foundation for the establishment of a new department.

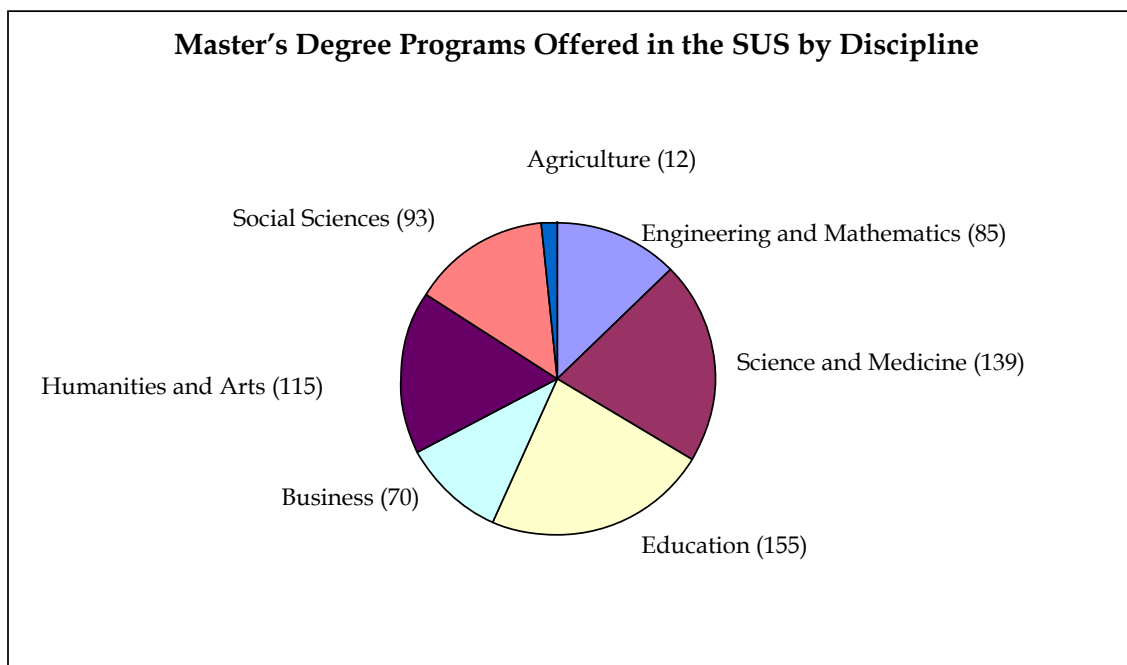
Admission to a Master's Degree Program

Admission to a master's degree program may require applicants to have a bachelor's degree in the same or a closely allied discipline, or to meet specific admissions standards (coursework, standardized test scores, etc.) that demonstrate potential for success in the program. A few university

programs have been designed in such a way that students earn their bachelor's and master's degrees at the same time or in close proximity, such as fast-track nursing and education programs.

A master's degree may be required for admission to a doctoral program, but work on a doctorate may also begin immediately after the bachelor's degree, with the master's degree earned along the way after successful completion of coursework and certain examinations. There are several discipline-based intermediate degrees, such as engineer's degrees, advanced master's degrees, and specialist degrees, which fall between the master's and the doctorate in terms of expectations and requirements.

In conclusion, the State University System of Florida has seen consistent growth in the number of students enrolling in and graduating from master's degree programs. Master's degrees provide advanced education to practitioners in their field of interest, allow for the development of expertise in emerging fields, provide knowledge necessary for professional licensure, and offer an alternative to a second bachelor's degree for students seeking a mid-career change of profession. Trend data indicate that there will be an increased need for professionals with master's-level training in the future, and the state of Florida is well positioned to meet this need.



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