MS Requirements

1. Thesis/Report Option

Students who are enrolled in the Thesis/Report option will complete either 24 hours of coursework plus 6 hours of supervised research thesis (ASE or EM 698A and 698B) or 27 hours of coursework plus 3 hours of supervised research report (ASE or EM 398R). Up to 6 hours of upper-division undergraduate coursework may be included in the required coursework. A faculty advisor is chosen by the student with the agreement of the adviser. The adviser will approve your Program of Work (PoW) and supervise your research. In the case of the Master's thesis, the supervised research must be taken in two consecutive semesters. For both the Thesis and the Report, the final research course must be taken in the semester of graduation.

2. Coursework Option

Students who are enrolled in the Coursework option will complete 30 hours of coursework. Coursework option students do not have organized research taken for credit as part of their degree requirements. Up to 6 hours of upper-division undergraduate coursework may be included in the required coursework. Your faculty advisor (normally the Area Coordinator) will approve your Program of Work (PoW).

Regardless of whether you choose 1 or 2 degree option, 6 hours must be completed in supporting coursework outside the Area of Study. Your faculty advisor can determine which courses are considered to be outside your Area of Study (typically anything not directly in your technical area but that is related). Master's degree students may count one 3 hour graduate-level, technical business course toward their degree with their advisor's approval. All courses must contain a significant technical component. Master's degree students may transfer up to 6 credit hours of approved coursework from another program if the course(s) have not been applied toward any other degree. In most cases, the courses must be similar to ones that are offered at The University of Texas to be eligible for transfer credit.

Master's degree students may not count courses taken on the credit/no credit basis toward the degree.

Time Limit

Coursework for the MS degree is good for a maximum of 6 years. If a student takes longer than this to complete their degree, they will have to take additional courses.

("In the case that there is a discrepancy between the degree requirements as listed on the website and in the Graduate Catalog, the Graduate Catalog takes precedence over anything on the website.)

Up to 6 upper division coursework hours are permitted.

Research hours may not be counted toward the 30 hour total for the coursework option (2), and all coursework must be related to the degree.

Students can meet with the graduate advisor to discuss their program of work and ensure it will meet the departmental degree requirements.

Math I and II

ASE 380P.1/EM 386K and ASE 380P.2/EM 386L are not recommended for beginning MS students although they are allowed to take them if they wish. These courses are for PhD students who are preparing for the Written Qualifying Exam.

Transfer Credits

A master’s student seeking to use coursework completed at another institution must provide the Graduate Studies Committee with an official transcript, the official explanation of the institution’s course numbering system and grading system, and the course description from the catalog of the institution as well as a course description for the UT catalog showing courses to be equivalent. Only 6 hours of transfer credit can be counted towards a master’s degree.

Graduate School Transfer of Credit page. This form must be submitted before 12 hours of graduate coursework are completed at UT-Austin.

Thesis or Report Options

Thesis students should register for ASE or EM 398A (Master's Thesis) the semester before they plan to graduate, and ASE or EM 398B (Master's Thesis) the semester they plan to graduate.

Report Students should register for ASE or EM 698R (Master's Report) the semester they plan to graduate.

Format Guidelines for Master’s Theses and Reports.

The length and format of the report or thesis should be agreed between the student and supervisor well in advance of the due dates. Students can access previous theses on the library database to see previous examples from the department. Filter by the location --Dissertations/Theses.

The difference between a thesis and report is that a report generally does not include novel data collection (although it may include novel analysis of data) and a thesis is therefore typically longer than a report.
Applying for Master’s Graduation

Students who wish to apply for master’s graduation should complete the Program of Work (from the ASE/EM Grad Student Portal Canvas Page), obtain your advisor’s signature, then submit to the Graduate Coordinator.

Students should understand and comply with the Graduate School requirements and deadlines for master’s degree submission. Graduate students are responsible for the costs of thesis preparation and publication.

Report or Thesis option students must be registered for ASE or EM 398R (Master’s Report) or ASE or EM 398B (Master’s Thesis) during the semester they graduate. Otherwise, their graduation application will not be accepted by the Graduate School.