

# MS in Geology

## Degree Requirements

- A minimum of 30 hours beyond the bachelor's degree.
- At least 15 hours of 8000- or 9000-level work.
  - For the Thesis Option, no more than 40% of those hours can be thesis research, problems in geological sciences, or similar courses.
  - For the Non-thesis Option, no more than 10% (3 credit hours) can be research, problems in geological sciences, or similar courses.
- Students must maintain a GPA of 3.00 for all competitive classroom work at MU. If GPA falls below 3.00, student must raise GPA to 3.00 or higher by end of next semester or be dropped from Master's program.
- The student must choose a supervisor by the middle of their second semester in residence, and make a brief written report to the faculty outlining the proposed thesis research.
- The Master's Final Exam is a defense of the thesis. The student should invite all faculty members to attend their defense. An oral presentation of the thesis results must be given at a departmental seminar (either fall or winter semester) as a part of the defense. After an open question-answer session, the student and the exam committee may conclude the defense in a closed question-answer session.
- The Non-thesis option also includes a public presentation of the project.

## Sample Plan of Study

An individual student's plan of study will be developed in coordination with their graduate supervisor and reflect the emphasis of their study. The student may also enroll in additional courses that do not appear on the Plan of Study submitted to the Graduate School.

**Plan of Study for Thesis Option:** No more than 12 hours (of the 30) can be Geology 7085, 7990, 8085, & 8090 (problems, readings, thesis research, etc.).

First Year			
Fall	CR	Spring	CR
GEOL 7650		3 GEOL 8750	3
GEOL 7100		3 GEOL 8200	3
GEOL 7180		3 GEOL 8090	3
		<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>
Second Year			
Fall	CR	Spring	CR
GEOL 8100		3 GEOL 8090	6
GEOL 8090		3	
		<b>6</b>	<b>6</b>

**Total Credits: 30**

**Plan of Study for Non-Thesis Option:** No more than 3 hours (of the 30) can be Geology 7085, 7990, 8085, & 8090 (problems, readings, thesis research, etc.).

First Year			
Fall	CR	Spring	CR
GEOL 7100		3 GEOL 7120	3
GEOL 7180		3 GEOL 8240	3
GEOL 7650		3 GEOL 8450	3
		<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>
Second Year			
Fall	CR	Spring	CR
GEOL 7200		4 GEOL 8050	3
GEOL 8100		3	
GEOL 8240		3	
		<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>

**Total Credits: 31**

## Thesis/Non-Thesis Requirements

The thesis option is accomplished by taking 18 to 21 graduate course credits and preparing a written thesis involving 9-12 credits of research or problems credits. Students have until the middle of their second semester in residence at the university to choose a supervisor and a thesis topic. The non-thesis track requires 27 hours of graduate course credits plus 3 hours of research credit leading to completion of a smaller-scope research project.

**Note on scheduling defenses:** Faculty members are not required to read theses or conduct final examinations during the summer field season.

## Admissions

Fall deadline: none set, but January 31st for guaranteed consideration for departmental financial aid for the following Fall-Spring academic year. Additional admission requirements and criteria:

- Equivalent of MU Bachelor of Science degree in geology or another science field is normally required prior to receiving an advanced degree. Science-course deficiencies must be made up before beginning thesis work.
- International students for whom English is a foreign language must submit a minimum TOEFL score 550 (paper-based) or 80 (Internet-based) or minimum IELTS of 6.5 (average) to be considered for admission.
- Admission is based upon examination of transcripts, required GRE scores (Verbal and Quantitative), and letters of recommendation. Serious consideration for admission requires a 3.00 GPA on the last 60 hours of undergraduate work, GRE scores above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile on the Verbal and Quantitative Tests, and strong letters of recommendation.
- GRE scores (required by the department).
- 3 letters of recommendation.
- Personal statement describing the applicants interests, background, motivation, and goals for graduate study at MU.

**Note on GRE Scores and GPA:** Our quantitative assessment of applicants uses a combination of GPA for the last 60 hours and the student's GRE verbal, quantitative and analytical writing scores. We have a formula that weights the GPA and total GRE scores equally. Applicants with a GPA less than 3.0 may be considered, but their acceptance would require very strong GRE scores or exceptional circumstances.

All materials are submitted online through the Graduate School.

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## Financial Aid from the Program

Although some graduate students in Geological Sciences are externally supported by fellowships or sponsors, many are generally supported by Graduate Teaching Assistantships and Graduate Research Assistantships. If you are interested in assistantship support, please be sure to indicate so on your application form.

**Contact:** Dr. Francisco Gomez  
101 Geological Sciences Building  
(573) 882-9744  
<https://geology.missouri.edu/graduate-program/>