DEGREES: GRADUATE-LEVEL

The General Announcements (GA) is the official Rice curriculum. In the event that there is a discrepancy between the GA and any other websites or publications, the GA shall prevail as the authoritative source.

Research Degrees

Research degrees are offered in seven of the eight schools at Rice, with some degrees combining studies in more than one school. Specific requirements for advanced research degrees in each field of study appear in the appropriate departmental pages (see Departments and Programs https://ga.rice.edu/programs-study/departments-programs/). Students seeking additional material should contact the appropriate department (see Graduate Degree Chart https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-opportunities/degree-chart/).

Doctoral Programs

The PhD degree is awarded for original studies in the departments listed in the Graduate Degree Chart https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-opportunities/degree-chart/, in architecture, the equivalent degree is the DArch; in music, the equivalent degree is the DMA. Candidates receive a PhD degree after successfully completing at least 90 semester credit hours of graduate study (coursework and research at the 500-level and above) and concluding an original investigation that is formalized in an approved thesis. As final evidence of preparation for this degree, the candidate must pass a public oral examination and submit the approved thesis to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. (See also Regulations and Procedures for Doctoral Degrees https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies/procedures/regulations-procedures-doctoral-degrees/#candidacy). The residency requirement for the doctorate is four semesters of full-time graduate study at Rice University, a minimum of one-third of the required credit hours must be completed at Rice.

Thesis Master’s Programs

The MA degree is available in the departments listed in the Graduate Degree Chart https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-opportunities/degree-chart/, including certain scientific fields of study. The MS degree is offered in the engineering and science fields also listed in the chart. Candidates may undertake the MArch, MArch in Urban Design, and MMus degrees as research degrees by adopting the thesis option. Candidates receive a master's degree after completing program specific degree requirements in addition to meeting university degree requirements (See also Regulations and Procedures for Thesis Master’s Graduate Degrees https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies/procedures/regulations-procedures-thesis-masters-degrees/):

- A minimum of 30 graduate semester credit hours of coursework taken at the 500-level or above (including thesis credit hours).
- A minimum of 24 graduate credit hours must be taken at Rice University.
- A minimum residency enrollment of one fall or spring semester of full-time graduate study at Rice University.
- A minimum overall GPA of 2.67 or higher in all Rice coursework.
- A minimum GPA of 2.67 or higher in all Rice coursework that satisfies requirements for the thesis master's degree.*
- All courses must be taken in the relevant field.

Some doctoral programs offer a thesis master’s degree opportunity as part of the doctoral program. If available, these opportunities are outlined in the Programs of Study https://ga.rice.edu/programs-study/departments-programs/ sections for each program.

*Note: Departments or programs may identify and define in their program’s General Announcements Requirements tab stricter standards than the minimum GPA for coursework that satisfies their academic program requirements.

Most students take three or four semesters to complete a master’s degree (some programs may require more time).

Non-Thesis Master’s Programs

Students also may pursue a non-thesis degree, sometimes referred to as a professional degree in certain departments. In some departments, the non-thesis degree also prepares the student for a doctoral-level program. This degree would be based on alternative departmental requirements and would include, but not be limited to, the following university requirements (See also Regulations and Procedures for Non-Thesis Master’s Graduate Degrees https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies/procedures/regulations-procedures-non-thesis-masters-degrees/):

- A minimum of 30 graduate semester credit hours of coursework taken at the 500-level or above.
- A minimum of 24 graduate credit hours must be taken at Rice University.
- A minimum residency enrollment of one fall or spring semester of part-time graduate study at Rice University. Some graduate programs may require full-time residency or additional semesters of residency.
- A minimum overall GPA of 2.67 or higher in all Rice coursework.
- A minimum GPA of 2.67 or higher in all Rice coursework that satisfies requirements for the non-thesis master's degree.*
- All courses taken must be in the relevant field.

Some doctoral programs offer coursework-only non-thesis master’s programs en route to the doctoral degree. Some doctoral programs offer non-thesis master’s degrees after a student achieves doctoral candidacy https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies/procedures/regulations-procedures-doctoral-degrees/). If available, these opportunities are outlined in the Programs of Study https://ga.rice.edu/programs-study/departments-programs/ sections for each program.

*Note: Departments or programs may identify and define in their program's General Announcements Requirements tab stricter standards than the minimum GPA for coursework that satisfies their academic program requirements. In some graduate programs, students may receive a master's degree when they achieve candidacy for the doctoral degree. Students seeking a master's degree in this manner must submit a petition for the degree, signed by their department chair, to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies by the deadline specified in the official Academic Calendar (http://registrar.rice.edu/calendars/) for degree conferral in the year in which the degree is to be awarded.

Diploma Programs

Diploma programs at Rice are post-master’s degree academic credential programs. Diploma candidates in these programs may be awarded
this academic credential after completing (See also: Regulations and Procedures for Diploma Programs):

- A minimum of 30 graduate semester credit hours of coursework taken at the 500-level or above.
- A minimum of 24 graduate semester credit hours must be taken at Rice University.
- A minimum residency enrollment of one fall or spring semester of part-time graduate study at Rice University. Some diploma programs may require full-time residency or additional semesters of residency.
- A minimum overall GPA of 2.67 or higher in all Rice coursework.
- A minimum GPA of 2.67 or higher in all Rice coursework that satisfies requirements for the diploma program.*
- All courses taken must be in the relevant field.

*Note: Departments or programs may identify and define in their program's General Announcements Requirements tab stricter standards than the minimum GPA for coursework that satisfies their academic program requirements.