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UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

ECONOMICS MA HANDBOOK

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1. Program Overview

The John Munro Godfrey, Sr. Department of Economics offers an Economics Master's (MA) degree for UGA undergraduates through the [Double Dawgs Program](#). In this document we refer to it as the AB/MA degree. Undergraduate students with at least a 3.7 GPA are competitive for admission to the program. The AB/MA program is designed for students who plan to pursue a PhD program in economics, finance, public policy, or statistics or who are looking for private- or public-sector positions that require significant technical research skills.

Aside from the AB/MA program, the MA degree is not offered as a terminal or stand-alone graduate degree in Economics. Only PhD students who discontinue work toward their doctorate are eligible to terminate their studies with the MA degree. Economics PhD students who wish to terminate their studies with the MA degree or who wish to earn the MA as they pursue their doctoral degree should reference the Economics PhD Student Handbook for more details.

A combined bachelor's/master's degree calls for a carefully coordinated four-year or five-year plan of study and close cooperation among several academic advisors. This is especially true in economics where a joint degree student must take many math and statistics courses in his or her first few years at UGA. Therefore, students interested in the combined degree program should discuss the opportunity with a departmental advisor while they are first-year students, and these advisors will help each student develop a plan of study.

There are two tracks to obtaining the MA degree, a Thesis Track and a Non-Thesis Track. For students interested in attending graduate school, the Thesis Track is strongly recommended. The Non-Thesis Track is more appropriate for students seeking a career in the private sector. The plan of study listed below provides details on the two degree tracks.

2. Plan of Study

To earn an AB/MA degree students must:

- Complete a minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate coursework, including required courses in mathematics and statistics, microeconomic theory and macroeconomic theory, and econometrics.
- Select either Thesis Track or Non-Thesis Track during the application process.
- Select a faculty member to serve as Major Professor during the fall semester when first enrolled as a Master's student. For those on the Thesis Track, the Major Professor also serves as the Thesis Advisor. For those on the Non-Thesis Track, the Graduate Coordinator can serve as Major Professor.
- Meet with the Graduate Coordinator and complete a Proposed Plan of Study.
- Those on the Thesis Track must:
 - Form a Thesis Advisory Committee and complete an Advisory Committee Form by the [deadlines](#) set by the Graduate School.
 - Write and defend an acceptable thesis by the [deadlines](#) set by the Graduate School.

Coursework

Students enrolled in the AB/MA program are required to complete a set of pre-requisite math courses during the first two years of their studies to gain proficiency in integral, differential, and multivariable calculus, as well as linear algebra. In their third year of study, students are required to complete courses in Mathematical Statistics (STAT 4510/6510 and STAT 4520/6520), as well as graduate (PhD level) courses in Microeconomic Theory (ECON 8010 and 8020) and Introduction to Econometrics (ECON 8080). In their fourth year, students are required to complete graduate (PhD level) courses in Macroeconomic Theory (ECON 8040 and 8050).

In addition, students who are on the Thesis Track must enroll in Master's Research (ECON 7000) and Master's Thesis (ECON 7300) and complete two graduate (PhD level) courses as electives during their fourth year. Students who are on the Non-Thesis Track are not required to enroll in ECON 7000/7300. Instead, they are required to complete five elective (PhD level) courses.

Students are permitted to take no more than 12 graduate credit hours before being fully admitted by the UGA Graduate School.

Note: This plan shows how to complete the program in four years. However, students often take five years to complete the requirements.

Thesis

In addition to the requirements above, students on the Thesis Track must write and defend their thesis according to [deadlines](#) set by the Graduate School.

3. Years 1 & 2

Timeline

During their first two years students must take (or earn AP credit) for at least one course in each of these two groups:

Group 1

- [MATH 2250](#) Calculus I for Science and Engineering
- [MATH 2300H](#) Differential Calculus (Honors) (4 credits)
- [MATH 2400H](#) Differential Calculus with Theory (Honors)

Group 2

- [MATH 2260](#) Calculus II for Science and Engineering
- [MATH 2310H](#) Integral Calculus (Honors) (4 credits)
- [MATH 2410H](#) Integral Calculus with Theory (Honors)

In addition, students must complete all courses in one of the following options:

Group 1

- [MATH 2270](#) Calculus for Science and Engineering III OR [MATH 2500](#) Multivariable Calculus
- [MATH 3200](#) Introduction to Higher Mathematics (Prerequisite for Math 3000)
- [MATH 3000](#) Introduction to Linear Algebra

Group 2

- [MATH 3500](#) Multivariable Mathematics I (Honors)
- [MATH 3510](#) Multivariable Mathematics II (Honors)

To ensure satisfactory progress towards being admitted to the AB/MA program, students are strongly encouraged to complete these requirements with the grades of A- and above.

In the spring of Year 2, each student should meet with the Graduate Coordinator and complete the proposed plan of study.

4. Year 3

Timeline

During the third year all students, regardless of whether they have chosen Thesis or Non-Thesis Track, must complete the following coursework:

Fall Semester

- [ECON 8010](#) Micro Theory I
- [STAT 4510/6510](#) Math Stat I

Spring Semester

- [ECON 8020](#) Micro Theory II
- [STAT 4520/6520](#) Math Stat II*
- [ECON 8080](#) Intro to Econometrics*

*Please note that although we permit students to take STAT 4520 contemporaneously with ECON 8080, some of 8080 utilizes concepts taught throughout 4520.

To ensure satisfactory progress towards being admitted to the program, students are strongly encouraged to complete these requirements with grades of A- and above.

Students must formally apply for the MA program during the Spring of Year 3. Students who wish to pursue the Thesis Track must complete the following requirements by the time of formal application to the MA program:

- Write a basic proposal for the thesis research.
- Identify a professor willing to supervise the thesis.

Note: This plan shows how to complete the program in four years. However, students often take five years to complete the requirements.

5. Year 4

Timeline

During their fourth year all students must complete the following coursework:

- [ECON 8040](#) Macro Theory I
- [ECON 8050](#) Macro Theory II

In addition, depending on whether students are on the Thesis or Non-Thesis Track they must earn the following 15 credits:

Thesis Track

- [ECON 7000](#) Master's Research (6 credits)
 - [ECON 7300](#) Master's Thesis
- Elective (6 credits)
- Any 2 other 8000-level courses (excluding 8980)

Non-Thesis Track

- Electives (15 credits)
- Any 5 other 8000-level courses (excluding 8980)

To make satisfactory progress towards earning an AB/MA, students should complete these requirements with grades of B and above. Furthermore, to obtain the MA degree, students must meet the minimum grade averages specified by the Graduate School. More details can be found [here](#).

Students on the Non-Thesis Track must submit a final program of study form and apply for graduation according to [deadlines](#) set by the Graduate School. They must indicate that they are on the Non-Thesis Track and list the Graduate Coordinator as the Major Professor/Advisor.

Students on the Thesis Track must submit a final program of study form, apply for graduation, and write and defend their thesis according to [deadlines](#) set by the Graduate School.

Note: This plan shows how to complete the program in four years. However, students often take five years to complete the requirements.

6. Thesis vs Non-Thesis Track

There are two tracks to obtaining the MA degree, a Thesis Track and a Non-Thesis Track. For students interested in attending graduate school, the Thesis Track is strongly recommended. The Non-Thesis Track is more appropriate for students seeking a career in the private sector. The plan of study listed below provides details on the two degree tracks

Students must formally apply for the MA program during the Spring of Year 3. By default, all students will be routed into the Non-Thesis Track. Those who remain on the Non-Thesis Track must submit a final program of study [form](#) and apply for graduation by the [deadlines](#) set by the Graduate School. They must indicate that they are on the Non-Thesis Track and list the Graduate Coordinator as the Major Professor/Advisor.

Students who wish to pursue the Thesis Track must complete the following requirements by the time of formal application to the MA program (in the Spring of Year 3):

- Write a basic proposal for the thesis research
- Identify a professor willing to supervise the thesis (also referred to as the chair of the thesis committee)

In addition, students on the Thesis Track must form an advisory committee according to the [guidelines](#) set by the Graduate School. This committee consists of a minimum of three members. The chair and at least one other member must be members of the Graduate Program Faculty at UGA. The third member may be a member of the Graduate Program Faculty or a person with a terminal degree holding one of the following ranks at UGA: assistant professor, associate professor, professor, academic professional, senior academic professional, public service assistant, public service associate, senior public service associate, assistant research scientist, associate research scientist, or senior research scientist. Further details can be found in Section 5 [here](#).

Students on the Thesis Track must write and defend their thesis according to the deadlines set by the Graduate School. These deadlines vary by the semester in which the student is planning to graduate. More details are provided [here](#).

7. Dismissal Policy

AB/MA students may be dismissed from the AB/MA program in the Department of Economics when any of the following have occurred:

1. The student's cumulative graduate course average falls below 3.0 for three consecutive terms. As outlined in the Graduate Coordinator's Handbook, "Students with a cumulative graduate course average below 3.0 will receive a warning letter from the Graduate School explaining the probation procedure. If a student's graduate course average is below 3.0 for two consecutive terms, the student will be placed on academic probation by the Graduate School. The student must maintain a 3.0 graduate course average each semester while on probation. Probation status ends when the student's cumulative graduate course average reaches at least 3.0. If the semester graduate course average drops below 3.0 while on probation, the student will be dismissed from the Graduate School."
2. The student is found guilty of academic dishonesty or other misconduct by Student Conduct in the Division of Student Affairs. As outlined in the Graduate Coordinator's Handbook, "Hearing on alleged violations of university conduct regulations fall within the jurisdiction of Student Conduct in the Division of Student Affairs. Violations of conduct regulations include but are not limited to academic honesty, falsification of university records, unauthorized entry into or use of university facilities, and theft. When instances of alleged misconduct arise, the faculty or staff member involved should report the incident to his/her department head. The head of the department and the faculty or staff member should contact Student Conduct regarding the alleged incident. Student Conduct, following its own procedures, will hear the case and send written notification of the decision to the department, the faculty or staff member, and the Graduate School."
3. In rare circumstances, graduate students on the Thesis Track who cannot identify a major professor or who cannot form an advisory committee shall be placed on a status called "No clear path to degree completion." This status is distinct from "Not in good standing," which refers to academic status. Students will be given one semester after being placed in this status by the program to identify a major professor or form a committee. The Graduate Coordinator will work closely with the student to try to rectify the problem. If the situation is not resolved during the semester, the student can be dismissed from the program or will be routed out of the Thesis Track. More details can be found [here](#).

8. Other Resources and Useful Information

Students should familiarize themselves with the Graduate School [website](#), the Graduate School [Policies and Procedures](#), as well as the Terry College of Business [Policies and Procedures](#).

The Graduate School website contains information on a range of important topics, such as:

- [Dates and Deadlines](#)
- [Enrollment Policy](#) (including information on minimum enrollment and leave of absence)
- [Financial Information](#)
- [Forms](#)
- [Policy for Teaching Assistants](#)

The Graduate School also has a useful [FAQ](#) and [list of resources](#) for graduate students, including [well-being resources](#).

International students can find helpful information at the International Student Life [website](#), the Office of Global Engagement's International Students [website](#) as well as their Immigration Services [website](#).

Our PhD and MA programs are designated under code [45.0603 Econometrics and Quantitative Economics](#) in the National Center for Educational Statistics Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP). This classification is included in the Department of Homeland Security's [STEM Designated Degree Program List](#), which means graduates can qualify for the [STEM OPT extension](#) of an F-1 visa.